



NEWS
2025



VOL. 43 NO. 2

MAKE IT COUNT

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2025

A HISTORIC CONVENTION



VFW National Officers taking their oath of office for 2025-2026 (from left): Adjutant General Dan West; QM General Marc Garduno (obscured); SVCiC Cory Geisler; JVCiC Glenn R. Umberger, Jr.; CiC Carol Whitmore.

Photo courtesy of Gundel Metz, PSC.

The 126th VFW National Convention saw history made with the election and installation of Carol Whitmore of Des Moines, IA, as the first female Veteran to serve as Commander-in-Chief. She is a 36-year Army Veteran. In an equally momentous turn of events, Wisconsin PSC Cory L. Geisler was nominated and elected from the Convention floor as Sr. Vice Commander-in-Chief.

In her acceptance remarks, CiC Whitmore noted, "I may be the first Veteran to have been elected VFW Commander-in-Chief while wearing a dress ... but I will not be the last ... I am your comrade by mud, by blood, by dust, by dirt, by sand, by land, by sea, by air ... I am a Veteran first." Following his election, SVCiC Geisler remarked, "Comrades, thank you for the confidence. I do know that there will be some mending that has to take place; some healing that's going to have to take place. But we are an organization that consistently comes together. That is what we do, because the mission has not changed and will not change for the VFW. No one does more for Veterans. That is our primary mission."

★ Our Wisconsin All-Americans ★



Ronald Ramos, Commander, Dept. of Wisconsin



James Cairo, Commander, District 1



Nathaniel Haumschild, Commander, Post 2115 – Hudson



Michael Fischer, Commander, Post 11038 - Rochester

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**What an Amazing Start
to This Command Year!**

What an incredible experience these first several months have been as **YOUR** State Commander! I knew stepping into this role would be busy, and it certainly has been, but it's also been tremendously rewarding.

In July, we gathered for our first Council of Administration (C of A) meeting in Wisconsin Rapids, officially launching the new command year. Alongside conducting the essential business to set our year in motion, we proudly unveiled our Joint Special Project: **"Campfire for Courage."**

This impactful initiative was introduced with heartfelt presentations by Nate Haumschild and Mark Klein (VFW Special Project Chairs), and Chris Pettis, Executive Director of The Highground. Their passion set the tone for what promises to be a transformative project, supporting PTSD retreats for Wisconsin Veterans and their families, in a safe, healing environment.

And let me tell you, **the fun meter was pegged!** From the camaraderie and energy in the room to the generosity shown toward our cause, the spirit of this Department was on full display. What a way to start the year! Thanks to **YOUR** support, we raised over \$10,000 during the C of A alone. That's an incredible start, and it shows the heart and strength of this Department in action.

Auxiliary President Kim McWilliams and I remain committed to continuing the emphasis on PTSD, this time expanding the focus to include both Veterans and their families. Returning home after military service can be an incredibly difficult transition, especially for those struggling with PTSD. This condition doesn't just affect the Veteran, it impacts spouses, children, and loved ones who share in the daily struggle. Our joint goal is to secure **200 sponsors**, with each covering the cost of one retreat experience at approximately \$500 per Veteran or family member.

**August: A Historic
National Convention**

August was a ride I will never forget, filled with pride and purpose during the 126th VFW National Convention held in Columbus, Ohio. One of the most powerful moments was witnessing Past State Commander/National Council Member (PSC/NCM) Cory Geisler nominated from the floor for Senior Vice Commander-in-Chief, by Past Commanders-in-Chief Keith Harman (Ohio) and Larry Rivers (Louisiana). It was a bold and inspiring move.

Cory ran on a clear platform: transparency, open dialogue, and member-focused leadership. In his address, he didn't hold back: "Our members are tired of it, I am tired of it. The time for transparency is now!"

And the message was loud and clear. Cory defeated the previously nominated Candidate

**Ty Letto
State Commander**



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Tim Peters, by over 1,200 votes. This wasn't just a victory for Cory; it was a strong statement from the membership that real change is wanted, and it's happening.

**Keel Laying Ceremony for
the USS Wisconsin (SSBN-827)**

August wrapped up on a truly inspiring high note, as I had the profound honor of representing our great Department at the Keel Laying Ceremony for the USS Wisconsin Nuclear Submarine, in North Kingstown, Rhode Island. This time-honored maritime tradition marks the official start of a ship's construction.

During the ceremony, the initials of the ship's sponsor were welded onto a steel plate and permanently affixed to the submarine's hull; a powerful symbol of strength, good fortune, and commitment to the ship and her future crew. For today's Navy, the keel laying also signifies the joining of the submarine's first modular hull sections, forming the structural "backbone" of what will become a formidable asset in our nation's defense, proudly bearing the name Wisconsin.

To stand there, as **YOUR** State Commander, representing the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the proud people of Wisconsin as this remarkable vessel begins to take shape, was a moment I will carry with me forever. It was a powerful reminder of our shared legacy of service, sacrifice, and strength.

A Word of Thanks

I want to sincerely thank you for the deep honor and privilege of serving as **YOUR** VFW State Commander. This is a duty I do not take lightly. Every day, I am inspired by the talent, passion, and commitment each of you brings to this Department. Together, we are building momentum, breaking barriers, and making a difference, for Veterans, for families, and for our communities.

I'm truly excited for all that we will accomplish together. I have no doubt that we will continue to ignite our passion for Veterans, crushing every goal we set, rising to every challenge we face, and making a lasting impact on every life we touch. So, let's move forward with purpose, lead with heart, and give our very best, because the work we do matters more than ever.

Until next time, remember to **"Make it Count"** in everything you do, because you make a difference in the life of a Veteran every single day!

**Renee L.
Simpson
State Sr. Vice
Commander**



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Change Is In The Air, In Black And White

The 126th National Convention brought many changes to the VFW. If you did not attend the Convention, you missed the membership being the voice of change and "doing the work" for the future of this organization.

An item that was amended in the National Bylaws are Sections **216** (Post) and **416b** (District) **Elected and Appointed Officers; Chairmen and Committees.** Under **(b)**, The Commander shall appoint an Adjutant, Chaplain, and may appoint a Service Officer. The amendment replaces "Service Officer" with **"Benefits Advisor"**. This change was made for one primary reason: to stop confusion of what our Post and District *Service Officers* can do.

Veterans would approach Post and District Service Officers, wanting them to start VA Disability Claims, which is NOT a task that they can complete, since they are not accredited to do so. Sadly, these Veterans would get upset and say that the VFW would not help them and have a negative mindset against the VFW.

"Benefits Advisor" is a truer title to what these folks can do at the Post and District levels, which is giving members contacts to resources that will better assist Veterans and their families. There are a number of resources not only within the VA system but outside of it as well. A wonderful opportunity for us to share our passion and knowledge for others to be more successful in life, which stems from doing outreach in your community and understanding legislation that is being presented on behalf of Veterans.

Comrades, the **"Benefits Advisor"** is very important for the VFW and Auxiliary. It can open doors not only for Veterans and their families, but the communities we live in as well.

"Problems can become opportunities when the right people come together."
— Robert Redford

STATE OFFICERS

Greetings Comrades,

What an amazing and historic National Convention last month! Not only did we elect Carol Whitmore as our Commander-in-Chief, our first female Veteran to lead our esteemed organization, but PSC Cory Geisler was elected from the floor, as our Sr. Vice Commander-in-Chief. Congratulations to Carol and Cory!

Since I have started to attend our National Conventions, I have learned a lot regarding our organization. Things such as the importance of our Legislative team on how they work to advance our Legislative agenda through the House and Senate. How important the members' voices are when it comes to elections and making changes to our Bylaws, Rituals, and Manual of Procedure. And of course, the camaraderie and connections that we make between Departments and members, and so much more.

I want to commend the Department of Ohio, which did an amazing job of hosting this year's Convention. However, it did not happen overnight. They had been planning for over two years and had numerous VFW and Auxiliary members volunteer to make it a success. They volunteered by staffing the Registration booth, staffing and running the VFW store, serving as drivers for the National staff, running the information booths and acting as "Traffic Directors" in the Convention Center, and helping people get to their committees and sessions.

Next year the National Convention is being held in Reno, Nevada, AND, in 2027, the National Convention will take place in Milwaukee, Wisconsin! I want to encourage everyone to take this opportunity to attend a National Convention "close to home". So put the dates of July 31 through August 4, 2027, on your calendars now.

I'm in the process of establishing our 2027 National Convention Committee, which will include District Commanders and Auxiliary Presidents, and from my understanding, close to 100 member volunteers from across the state. We need all hands on deck to make this a success! So standby, save the dates, and expect more information from me and others on how you can help make our National Convention in Wisconsin a success!

**George
Stoeber
State Jr. Vice
Commander**



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"The HQ Dispatch"

Greetings Comrades!

HQ would first like to congratulate Cory Geisler on being elected Senior Vice Commander-in-Chief at the National Convention in Ohio! He will certainly make Wisconsin proud as he steps up to lead our National organization.



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QM Tom Heath
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By now, your Post QM should have sent in their Bond application and payment to HQ. If you are seeing this, and have yet to do that, ensure you communicate with HQ ASAP and get that over to us to stay in compliance with what needs to be done. Also, July 31 was the due date for your June audit, which covers the period of April 1 through June 30. And of course, your September audit is coming up quickly, due to us October 31.

We encourage you to visit our site **vfwwi.org** to stay up to date with the latest and greatest information. While you're there, check out the

ton of great resources in the **Members Only** section for you to utilize as well. Also, be sure to like and follow our Facebook page **facebook.com/VFWWI** or search for "Wisconsin VFW." There you'll also find important information as well as informative posts about great events that have happened throughout Wisconsin.

The HQ team stands by to assist you in any issues that may arise throughout the year. Don't hesitate to use us as a resource to help make your Post be successful and compliant with your mandatory tasks.

Greetings fellow Wisconsinites,

I hope all are doing well, coming up to the quarter-way point of our year. I hope Commanders and Quartermasters have gone through the Program Book and are checking off the list of things to do. This is an important tool to follow to keep you on track so you do not have to play "catch-up" later in the year. Important items are the April-June Audit that was due July 31, and the Quartermaster Bond that was due August 31.

Posts that are tracking for All-State: the Irreverent Warriors Hike was August 16, but be sure to review the list of upcoming additional events and programs on page 24 (Program Book) so your Post is involved. Don't forget: with school starting, your Post VOD/PP Chair needs to be getting the info out to the schools and community as the deadline is fast approaching on October 31.

A big event is the Bus Trip to the Fall Festival at the VFW National Home in Eaton Rapids, MI. Be sure to get registered if you are interested in attending. [See info elsewhere in this issue or on the website – **vfwwi.org**.]

**Keith
Lauth
Chief-of-Staff**



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Fall knocking on the door brings District Meetings and Post Inspections, so make sure you are getting prepared and asking the questions at your District meetings to make your Inspection go smoothly. The Mid-Winter Hotel and Registration portal is also active on the website, so get your reservation in. You can cancel with no penalty a week out if needed.

A reminder: Ty's Commander shirts are still available on the State website under the Members Only section. If you don't have access you can reach out to me directly to order one. THANK YOU for all you continue to do to **"Make it Count!"**

STATE OFFICERS

Comrades,

Another National Convention is in the books, and all I can say is — what an event! Please join me in congratulating PSC Cory Geisler on his election as Senior Vice Commander-in-Chief. His path to this position is remarkable in itself, and I'll leave it to others to share that story in detail.

As a member of the National Bylaws Study Group, I had a front row seat to much of the action. For the second year in a row, one of the proposed Bylaws amendments required a *Roll Call* vote—a relatively rare occurrence. While the amendment received a simple majority, it fell short of the two-thirds majority needed for adoption.

This particular amendment, submitted by our state, proposed that once a Commander-in-Chief (CiC) completes their term, they would be ineligible for appointment to a paid National-level position. The debate on the floor was both spirited and thought-provoking. Two primary viewpoints emerged:

- The CiC should have the discretion to appoint the most qualified individuals.
- Implementing a “cooling-off period” is a common best practice that helps safeguard the organization from the appearance or risk of nepotism.

Interestingly, past CiCs were nearly evenly split on this issue.

For those unfamiliar, during a Roll Call vote, a state's voting strength is determined by the number of Posts in good standing *that have Delegates present* at the Conven-

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Judge Advocate



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tion. This can result in states like California or Texas having fewer votes than smaller states, depending on Delegate participation. The same system applies at the State level. To cast a vote, your Post must be in good standing and have Delegates present.

Looking ahead, the 2027 National Convention will be held in Milwaukee, and it would be incredible to see every Post in our state represented by a Delegate. Should Cory Geisler be elected Commander-in-Chief by then, that Convention will mark the conclusion of his term—a truly momentous occasion.

If you've never attended a National Convention, I strongly encourage you to consider it. As Past CiC Hal Roesch often reminded us during this year's Convention, *“This is where the rubber meets the road.”*

I hope this brief update offers some valuable insight into the workings of the National Convention. I look forward to seeing continued engagement and participation from our dedicated comrades.

Seeds of Service

Comrades,

As autumn begins, we are reminded of the timeless truth that what we plant today will shape the harvest of tomorrow. The fields around us may be filled with golden corn or fading leaves, but in our hearts and communities, we carry seeds of service waiting to be sown. Every act of kindness, every step toward advocacy, every word of encouragement is a seed planted for the future well-being of our Veterans and their families.

Serving as a Veterans Service Officer, supporting vital legislation, mentoring a younger Veteran, or simply showing up at a Post meeting are not small gestures. They are seeds of lasting impact. Each one has the power to take root and grow into something larger than we may ever see with our own eyes. When we give of ourselves, we invest in the strength, dignity, and hope of those who served beside us and those who will follow in our footsteps.

But the garden does not flourish without intention. Just as a farmer must till the soil, water the ground, and trust in the process, we too must cultivate our service with care. That means being present for one another, extending the hand of fellowship, and recognizing that our

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State Chaplain



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collective effort is what makes the VFW strong. The garden we tend today is not for ourselves alone, it is for generations of Veterans who will need a place of belonging, a voice in government, and a hand to lift them up.

Let us be generous Sowers. Sow compassion. Sow commitment. Sow the kind of service that leaves a legacy of unity and strength. We may not always see the full harvest of our labor, but rest assured, every seed of service planted in love and loyalty will bear fruit in its season.

As we enter this autumn, let us make it count. Let us plant abundantly, knowing that the work we do now will nurture the garden of Veteran well-being for years to come.

With faith, purpose, and camaraderie.

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Nov. 2025 Issue Vol. 43, No. 3 Deadline to Editor: October 6, 2025

Jan. 2026 Issue Vol. 43, No. 4 Deadline to Editor: December 5, 2025

Mid-Winter Conference • February 6-7, 2026

March 2026 Issue Vol. 43, No. 5 Deadline to Editor: February 9, 2026

May 2026 Issue Vol. 43, No. 6 Deadline to Editor: April 6, 2026

Department Convention • June 10-13, 2026

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Wisconsin Veterans of Foreign Wars

**Wisconsin Veterans
of Foreign Wars News**



Comrades:

There are at least two funds that every Post Quartermaster needs to include in their financial reporting: The General Fund and the Relief Fund. **Section 219 of the Bylaws** require that every Post establish and maintain a Relief Fund for “Buddy” Poppy proceeds and other monies solicited or donated for Veteran relief purposes.

Since Posts are required to have a Relief Fund, the Quartermaster needs to report monthly to the Post membership and quarterly to the Department on its financial status. This fund, unlike the General Fund, is a restricted fund and can only be used for the purposes outlined in **Section 219 of the Manual of Procedure**. In brief, these abbreviated purposes include:

- Aid, assistance, relief and comfort of needy Veterans, surviving spouses and dependents.
- Maintenance and expansion of the VFW National Home.
- Expenses to provide entertainment, care and assistance to hospitalized Veterans or members of the Armed Forces.
- Veteran rehabilitation, welfare and service work.
- To perpetuate the memory of deceased Veterans and comfort their survivors.
- To foster true patriotism through historical and educational programs (i.e. Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen).
- Remission of dues for sick and needy members.
- Expenses to support the Relief Fund such as purchasing “Buddy” Poppies.

The problem the Department has observed for several years now is that many Quarterly Audits don't show that the Post maintains a Relief Fund. Another observation noted is that the amount reported in the Relief Fund never changes. Technically, neither situation is acceptable. So, don't be surprised if the HQ staff ask why your Post hasn't reported funds in Relief.

Every Post must have a Relief Fund supported by donations and/or “Buddy” Poppy Drives. As you can see, there are many worthwhile uses for Relief monies. Comrades, this is one core reason why we exist as VFW Posts — *to assist needy Veterans and their families, and to promote remembrance of our sacrifices and patriotism.*

Don't fail in this core mission. Every Post needs to distribute “Buddy” Poppies, credit the proceeds to the Relief Fund and then use the funds as expected to support Veterans and VFW programs. Not only does the “Buddy” Poppy Distribution raise money for your Relief Fund, but it also gives your VFW Post a visible presence in the community.

If you have questions about the Post Relief Fund, please contact Department staff, your District Commander or me, and I'm sure we'll be able to help you out. **Make it Count** for Veterans and their families. Have a great VFW year!

Greetings Comrades,

I write to you following a most exciting time at the National Convention. I am sure that everyone else has already commented on it, so I will spare you the details. Just know that I am invigorated by the spirit of change within the organization! I genuinely feel that we are headed in the right direction with leaders who value the members' voices and promote true transparency at every level.

This year, Commander Letto's special project has been named “Campfire for Courage.” His goal is to sponsor at least 200 Veterans and their families to attend PTSD retreats at The Highground in Neillsville, WI. I am sure you have all heard of The Highground. It is a 155-acre park with Veterans tributes, a museum, and hiking trails. Their mission is to “Honor, Educate, and Heal.” If you have never been there, I highly encourage you to visit. It is astoundingly beautiful, tranquil, and healing.

Did you know that The Highground also hosts workshops and retreats for Veterans and their families? All of the programming is FREE for the Veterans who register. (They do require a \$50 registration fee, but this is refunded upon arrival.) This fall, they are hosting a series of 10 guitar or ukulele lessons. This series runs from 04 September through 06 November. The weekend of 17-19 October,

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State Inspector



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they are hosting “Operation Re-Connect.” This workshop is a couples retreat and aims to provide an opportunity to reconnect, develop better communication skills, and reignite the romance. Lodging, meals, and workshop materials are included. The Highground also has a Winter Veterans Retreat in January. Activities include ice fishing, snowshoeing, PTS Growth workshops, art instruction, food, and camaraderie.

I have highlighted only three of the programs coming up at The Highground. To see everything they have going on, visit their website and click on the events calendar: thehighground.us/calendar/ will take you directly there. Please get to The Highground and see what they have to offer!

Until next time, stay happy and healthy!

Angela Thomsen
State Surgeon



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Planning for Upcoming Meetings

- **2026 Department Mid-Winter Conference**
Fri.-Sat., February 6-7, 2026
Hilton Appleton Paper Valley • \$129 + taxes
333 W. College Ave., Appleton, WI 54911 • 920-733-8000
- **2026 Department Convention**
Wed.-Sat., June 10-13, 2026
Holiday Inn & Suites/Central WI Expo Center • \$112 + taxes
1000 Imperial Ave., Rothschild, WI 54474 • 715-355-1111
- **2026-2027 Program Kickoff/Council of Administration**
Fri.-Sat., July 10-11, 2026
Location: To Be Determined
- **2027 Department Mid-Winter Conference**
Fri.-Sat., February 5-6, 2027
Hilton Appleton Paper Valley • \$129 + taxes
333 W. College Ave., Appleton, WI 54911 • 920-733-8000
- **2027 Department Convention**
Wed.-Sat., June 9-12, 2027
Madison Marriott West • \$132 + taxes
1313 John Q Hammons Dr., Middleton, WI 53562 • 608-831-2000

NOTE: In most instances, special room blocks include the night before events start.

Time for Children's Christmas

at Oscar G. Johnson VA
in Iron Mountain, MI

It's hard to believe that just ten years ago we took on a special project of gathering funds for Christmas gifts for the children of Veterans in need from Northern Wisconsin and Upper Michigan. In most years, we have gifted over 90 children. It is especially heart-warming to read the thank-you notes from those Veterans, expressing how much being able to provide Christmas for their children has meant to them. We continue to do this project in conjunction with the Military service groups of Michigan.

Oscar G. Johnson VA (Iron Mountain) has again requested that we purchase the Walmart gift cards since the VA does not have a purchase agreement with Walmart. The Walmart cards are purchased and delivered to Oscar G. Johnson VA Voluntary Services, for distribution to the needy families with children.

We are again asking for YOUR help for this worthy project. The OGJ VAMC Voluntary Services Department has assured us that the gift cards will go to needy Veterans' children and families. Any money you can provide will be appreciated. Funds need to be received by **November 4, 2025**.

Once again, VFW Department of Wisconsin HQ is the "clearinghouse" for all donations. Oscar G. Johnson VA will receive a listing of all donors. Please make your check payable to **VFW Department of Wisconsin**, earmark "**OGJ Children's Christmas**" and mail to:

VFW Department Headquarters
Attention: Tom Heath, QM
P.O. Box 6128
Monona, WI 53716-0128

Please direct any questions you may have to any of us at our numbers below. Thank you for all you do for our Veterans and their families!

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STATE OFFICERS

Editor's note: Congratulations to our newly-elected Sr. Vice Commander-in-Chief, and thank you for your two years of outstanding representation as Wisconsin's National Council Member in 2023-2025. We wish you all good things as you support Commander-in-Chief Carol Whitmore's command year, and prepare for your own. A Special Election was held by the Wisconsin Council of Administration on September 3, 2025, to fill the remaining two years of the NCM term. Congratulations to State QM Tom Heath who was elected from five candidates. Look for his first column in the November/December 2025 WI VFW NEWS.

Comrades,

As I conclude my term as National Council Member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of Wisconsin, I do so with a heart full of gratitude and pride in the work we've done together.

These past two years, it has been more than a position, it's been a mission. A mission grounded in service, camaraderie, and a shared determination to ensure that no Veteran is ever forgotten, overlooked, or left behind. From the smallest Posts to the largest Districts, each of you has contributed to something greater than any one individual: the enduring legacy of the VFW.

We've stood together to advocate for stronger Veterans' benefits at the State and National levels. We've honored our fallen with reverence. We've strengthened our outreach, brought in new members, and reminded our communities that the VFW isn't just about the past, it's a vital part of

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the present and future. I'm proud of what we've accomplished because we did it as a team. Leadership is not about one voice, but about listening to many. And I've been honored to hear your voices, your ideas, and your passion for this organization every step of the way.

To all of the State Officers, Post and District leaders, Auxiliary partners, and every VFW member across Wisconsin: I thank you for your trust, your support, and your unwavering commitment to the mission. To those now stepping into leadership, remember to lead with integrity. Lead with compassion. Never lose sight of why we wear this cap, not for recognition, but for responsibility.

Though my NCM time is ending, my service to this great organization continues. I remain a comrade, always ready to support our cause and those who carry the torch forward. I look forward to watching the Wisconsin VFW grow during my time as National Senior Vice Commander. And to the new National Council Member: remember that Wisconsin leads the way.

2025 TEACHER OF THE YEAR PROGRAM

Greetings Comrades,

As kids and teachers are back in school, let's look at turning in nominations for this year's Teacher of the Year Award. The Smart/Maher VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher program recognizes outstanding educators in three grade levels: Elementary, Middle and High School. This program stimulates interest in America's history, traditions, Americanism, civic responsibility, flag etiquette, patriotism and more.

Because we know that teachers care deeply about our students' futures, we enthusiastically recognize them. We are asking each Post and District to nominate those educators who exemplify these interests. All certified Wisconsin educators in grades K-12 are eligible. Previous national winners are not.

In order to nominate a teacher, fill out the 2025-2026 Smart/Maher VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher Award nomination, and include their picture. They will be judged on all levels according to their respective Citizenship, Innovation, Resources, and passion for our youth. Visit: [vfw.org/community/youth-and-education/teacher-of-the-year](https://www.vfw.org/community/youth-and-education/teacher-of-the-year) for detailed rules and info, and the necessary form. [Make sure you use the 2025 form!]

The **DEADLINES** are:

- October 31 – entries due at the Post
- November 15 – entries due to the District
- January 1 – entries due to Department

Steve Eisenhauer and I will select the Wisconsin representatives and send them on to National. Please be kind to our Post and District level committees by submitting your entries on time, so that winners can be forwarded on for consideration. As a reminder, these activities help for end-of-year awards and considerations such as All-State, All American, and so forth.

Please reach out with questions – I'm here to help. Let's "Make it Count" in this program!

"CAMPFIRE FOR COURAGE" UPDATE

Our Special Project effort is already off to a strong start, following our successful launch event at the July Council of Administration. Huge thanks to Chris Pettis, Executive Director of The Highground for coming out and presenting!

Thanks to that momentum, the initiative has already secured sponsorships for **20 Veterans or their adult family members** to attend The Highground's retreats! Two months in and we are at 10% of our goal! The ultimate goal is to reach **200 Veteran/family pairs**, ensuring that those who served – and the loved ones who walk beside them – can share in the healing process together.

Every dollar raised through "Campfire for Courage" directly covers lodging, meals, programming, and supplies for participating Veterans and family members. Don't forget to call on community partners, businesses, and individuals in your area

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to keep the fire burning and help meet the goal. Healing doesn't happen alone, and with each sponsorship we're potentially changing two lives at once.

Share your fundraising events on our Facebook group - just search for **Campfire for Courage** and jump into the discussion! I'll have downloadable content there for flyers and promotional materials; if you have an idea to help promote our fundraiser, please share it! Until next time, keep the fire burning because together we heal.

**CAMPFIRE
FOR COURAGE**

**SUPPORTING PTSD RETREATS
FOR VETERANS AND FAMILIES**

WISCONSIN VFW COMMANDER'S SPECIAL PROJECT 2025-26

**GOAL: TO HELP 200
VETERANS AND FAMILIES**

**\$500 SPONSORS
ONE VETERAN
OR SPOUSE**

**THE
HIGHGROUND**

MEMBERSHIP

Current Membership Totals By District

Dist.	Life	New	Reinstate	Continuous	Total	Adj. Prior Year	Percentage
1	2245	70	23	71	2409	2797	86.12%
2	3078	18	2	62	3160	3489	90.57%
3	722	0	1	13	736	845	87.10%
4	1129	1	2	30	1162	1269	91.56%
6	1672	11	3	16	1702	1863	91.35%
7	2096	9	0	37	2142	2378	90.07%
8	1796	3	2	38	1839	2059	89.31%
9	2539	14	2	30	2585	2739	94.37%
10	1321	4	3	48	1376	1534	89.70%
11	1599	7	2	70	1678	1844	90.99%
99	1425	37	4	45	1511	1906	79.27%
Totals	19622	174	44	460	20300	22723	89.33%

Totals as of September 3, 2025
419 Legacy Life Members

Recruit WISCONSINBLY!

We have started the new membership year for State Commander Ty Letto strong. Let’s keep that fire burning to the finish line with 101% or more! We have shown it can be done.

All Posts: Keep checking your **Mem-stats** in order to keep the momentum going! As you read this, the **Online Membership System (OMS)** on the National website **vfw.org** has been updated with Life Membership numbers and we can see how many members we need to reach our goal – **and surpass it**. With that said, let’s keep in touch with our Annual members who are considered “unpaid”, to let them know now that they can pay early.

Reminder: Details for all of the next monthly **Recruiter Contests** are on page 18 of the 2025-2026 Commander’s Program book:

- **September:** One/Two tickets for VFW National Home Fall Festival Bus Trip
- **October:** Two tickets for Hoops for Troops-Milwaukee Bucks or two tickets for Veterans Salute-Milwaukee.
- **February:** Two tickets for Veteran of the Game at a selected Brewers Game by the Membership Chairman and availability of the Brewers.

Check out the Recurring Incentives on pages 11-14 too. We are showing great strides in recruiting members, there have been several “Recruit Wisconsinbly” T-shirts given out to many members for recruiting one member. Let’s keep it up! If you would like a **“Recruit Wisconsinbly” T-shirt, all you have to do is recruit one member.**

Reminder: You still have time for the **1st Quarter 100% Membership Program Challenge!** The **deadline** is Tuesday, September 30, 2025. Posts with 50 or more members achieving 100% membership by the deadline will be entered to win \$500 (1 winner). Posts with 40 or fewer but more than 25 members will be entered to win \$250 (1 winner).

Michele Rathke
State Membership Chairman
WFW
715-218-0440
MicheleR@vfwwi.org



Check out the Extra Incentives details elsewhere on this page. At the July C of A and Kickoff, District 3 earned the “Recruit Wisconsinbly Cheese” Belt for coming in cheesetastic (last) place for membership. District 1 earned the right to show off that they are the champion of the “Recruit Wisconsinbly” Membership Belt AND Life Membership Belt for having the highest membership and Life Members. Let’s keep the fun going with the District Challenge and we’ll see who will be the next Champion or “Cheesehead” Districts at the next Council meeting (online) in September.

We have had a lot of successful Events and Membership Drives during these first months of the Command year, look for some photos elsewhere in this issue:

- **July:** Harley-Davidson Hometown Rally; Navy Week; American Legion Convention
- **August:** State Fair with the Budweiser Salute to Veterans; VFW National-led Membership Training; ARCA Race; NGAUS (National Guard Assoc.) Conference; Milwaukee Mile

Upcoming events (at the time of this writing) are:

- Northwoods Fall Ride - September 11-13 in Tomahawk
- Cranberry Festival - October 4 in Washburn County near Spooner

And many other great fall events in counties and communities across the state, so make sure **YOUR POST** is out there, **RECRUITING WISCONSINBLY! “Make it Count!”**

Extra Incentives 2025-2026 Membership Program
District Commander “Recruit Wisconsinbly”
Membership & Life Membership Belt,
and “Recruit Wisconsinbly Cheese” Belt

The District with the highest membership recruited numbers at each Council of Administration (C of A,) will earn the right to have the “Recruit Wisconsinbly” Belt (RW Belt) until the next C of A. The first initial RW Belt will be presented at July 2025 C of A. The District Commander who starts with the RW Belt and must relinquish the RW Belt to a different District Commander will ensure the District Commander receives the RW Belt prior to the next C of A, especially the online C of A.



The District with the highest lifetime membership percentage at each Council of Administration (C of A,) will earn the right to have the “Recruit Wisconsinbly” Belt (RW Belt) until the next C of A. The first initial RW Belt will be presented at July 2025 C of A. The District Commander who starts with the RW Belt and must relinquish the RW Belt to a different District Commander will ensure the District Commander receives the RW Belt prior to the next C of A, especially the online C of A.



The District with the lowest membership percentage at each Council of Administration (C of A,) will earn the right to have the “Recruit Wisconsinbly Cheese” Belt (RWC Belt) until the next C of A. The first initial RWC Belt will be presented at July 2025 C of A. The District Commander who starts with the RWC Belt and must relinquish the RWC Belt to a different District Commander will ensure the District Commander receives the RWC Belt prior to the next C of A, especially the online C of A.



If during the time the District Commander has possession of either the RW or RWC Belt during their District Meeting timeframe, the RW or RWC Belt will be worn by the District Commander during the District Meeting.

TOP RECRUITING UPDATE
through 9/8/2025

Recruiter	Post	Dist.	Recruits	Recruiter	Post	Dist.	Recruits
Steven J. Eisenhauer	1318	2	41	Oscar Prado	2895	4	1
Robert E. Haisler	11038	1	28	Kurt W. Baker	6498	4	1
Michelle Leick-Leurquin	2113	8	16	John F. Kleinmaus	1393	6	1
Brent C. Hibbard	11038	1	15	Rebecca R. Shea	1393	6	1
Jason T. Coffey	11038	1	15	David A. Mix	2126	6	1
James A. Cairo	11038	1	14	Dawn M. Putzke	2925	6	1
Thomas E. Heath	1621	1	11	Edward L. Krueger	8834	6	1
Adam S. Wallace	328	2	11	James K. Pelech	8834	6	1
Lawrence A. Rugg	7308	1	7	Jessie Cornelius	8834	6	1
Randall J. Meyer	1163	2	5	Anita M. Kohlhagen	9156	6	1
Randy L. Engness	2204	9	5	Derek T. Schukow	9924	6	1
John D. McCoy	7308	1	3	Michael B. Pietsch	1866	7	1
Dena M. McCormick	11038	1	3	Camerron F. Wettern	2534	7	1
Paul E. Morrison	2534	7	3	Thomas J. Hoffman	2723	7	1
Phil J. Tojek	10441	1	2	Christopher T. Ankele	6003	7	1
Jason E. Johns	328	2	2	Barbara J. McCloy	10262	7	1
William A. Backes	8320	2	2	Ryan J. McCaffrey	10262	7	1
Anthony E. Veeder	8483	2	2	Kenneth R. Corry	2037	8	1
Richard J. Bartol	2925	6	2	Patrick L. Shimon	6179	8	1
Michele A. Rathke	1638	7	2	Robert J. Thornton, Jr.	6823	8	1
Richard A. Mitchell	9464	9	2	Bruce E. Jagodinsky	7534	8	1
David F. Gentile	9536	10	2	Justin C. Leistiko	9677	8	1
Angela L. Thomsen	10911	11	2	Mark T. Schiltgen	2115	9	1
Michael E. Zientek	1621	1	1	Nate J. Haumschild	2115	9	1
Michael K. White	1621	1	1	Richard W. Byers	2115	9	1
Andrew L. Suthers	2312	1	1	Gregory A. Roth	8338	9	1
Jason B. Dean	5470	1	1	Roger D. Bender	8338	9	1
Daniel E. Mckee	7308	1	1	Isaiah M. Hart	8494	9	1
Darren M. Manick	7308	1	1	Billy B. Buss	9057	9	1
Joel T. Eaves	7308	1	1	Krist D. Beseler	10406	9	1
Larry F. Sorensen	7308	1	1	Brian L. Cribbs	10818	9	1
William F. Hustad	10549	1	1	James G. Alsteen	3143	10	1
Michael F. Fischer	11038	1	1	Jeffrey J. Hein	5729	10	1
Melissa A. Huston	328	2	1	Michael A. Skinner	7233	10	1
Sherri R. Barrett	328	2	1	Peter M. Bresette	8239	10	1
Charles G. Staab	1163	2	1	Don Radloff	9536	10	1
Tyrone L. Letto	1163	2	1	Parish D. Henning	1382	11	1
Gundel M. E. Metz	1318	2	1	John E. Noga	1916	11	1
Archie L. Hafer	1879	2	1	Timothy F. Salzwedel	2114	11	1
Garret A. Collins	2260	2	1	John A. Hammes	8278	11	1
Scott Rubitsky	8216	2	1	Thomas D. Lee	8584	11	1
Gary L. Friske	9511	2	1	Renee L. Simpson	10911	11	1
Terry D. Wilkinson	7345	3	1				



It's not the price
you pay
to become a member.

It's the price
you paid
to become eligible.



EXCITING “BUDDY”® POPPY NEWS

Comrades and Auxiliary Members,
There are lots of exciting things happen-
ing with Poppies this year.

First is a “Red Friday Special”. This is a special opportunity to increase your “Buddy”® Poppy stock for **one day only**. Our hope is that you will not only stock up for your annual events, but also a new Poppy contest for our youth. Details for that initiative are elsewhere on this page. Basic details for the “Red Friday Special”:

- **Online** sales will be on October 10 **only**.
- All mailed-in orders must be received at State Headquarters no later than **October 14**.
- Payment **must** accompany either type of order.
- Pricing is discounted from regular rates in effect – a chance to save some money!
- **Remember:** ALL orders REQUIRE a VFW Membership ID and they **MUST** ship to that VFW Member’s address.

The **Youth “Buddy”® Poppy Display Contest** is slated for our 2026 Mid-Winter Conference in Appleton at the Hilton Paper Valley Hotel. We hope it will promote more community involvement, especially with our youth, and spread more information about the “Buddy”® Poppy.

NOTE: This special Contest is *in addition to* the traditional Poppy Contest held each Mid-Winter. Details for that Contest are in the VFW Auxiliary S’More News Packet for September, or contact Auxiliary Chair Louise Engness at wagnerla4@gmail.com.

We are excited about these new Poppy opportunities and hope you will be too! Please contact me or VFW Co-Chair Brandon Pszanka or Auxiliary Chair Louise Engness.

Renee L. Simpson
VFW "Buddy"®
Poppy Chair
VFW
608-343-3906
sheserveswi@gmail.com



OUR PROGRAMS

Youth “Buddy”® Poppy
Mid-Winter Display Contest

Renee Simpson
VFW Chairman
ReneeS@vfwwi.org
Brandon Pszanka
VFW Co-Chairman
brandon.pszanka@gmail.com
Louise Engness
VFWA Chairman
wagnerla4@gmail.com

The purpose of this contest is to promote community involvement and promote the meaning behind the “Buddy”® Poppy. This is an opportunity for our VFW and Auxiliary members to connect with our public and private and home schools while sharing the story of the “Buddy”® Poppy and what it represents, and why it is important, while promoting patriotism in our classrooms. The contest is for grades K-12, broken down into four Divisions. The display entry can be submitted by a class, whole grade, art class, etc.

The entries shall be sponsored by a VFW Post and or Auxiliary.

Divisions for the Contest

- Division 1: Grades K - 2
- Division 2: Grades 3 - 5
- Division 3: Grades 6 – 8
- Division 4: Grades 9 - 12

How to get information for Contest

Forms can be found on **vfwwi.org** under the “Buddy”® Poppy tab to share with local schools.

Who pays for the displays?

Each VFW and Auxiliary that chooses to work with a class and submit an entry is responsible for acquiring the “Buddy”® Poppies used in the display. If further supplies are needed, please assist participants.

Due Date for Displays

Displays need to be set up the first day of the Mid-Winter Conference, with the winners being announced at the Mid-Winter Conference Banquet.

Prizes for the winners

The top three (3) entries in each Division will receive a certificate. The First Place Winner in each Division will receive a pizza party (or equivalent), paid for by the Department of Wisconsin VFW. The Post who sponsored the winning display is also encouraged to participate in the pizza party, along with the students.

VFW DEPARTMENT OF WISCONSIN BUDDY POPPY ORDER FORM
“Red Friday Special”
October 10, 2025
Post Number:
Point of Contact:
Mailing Address:
Phone Number:
ITEM QUANTITY COST TOTAL ORDERED
Buddy Poppy – Tin X 500 \$75.00 per 500
Buddy Poppy Legacy X 500 \$150.00 per 500
X 1000 \$285.00 per 1000
TOTAL DUE
Remit payment with this order form. Unused Poppies cannot be returned
To Pay By Credit Card
Type of Card:
Name on Card:
Card #:
CVC #: Exp Date (MM/YY)
Signature: Zip Code:
Order & Pay online at
VFWWI.ORG
~OR~
Mail to:
VFW of Wisconsin
PO Box 6128
Monona, WI 53716-0128

Greetings VFW Family,
As I’m writing this article, feeling the season change to fall, I’m thinking how this summer sure flew by! AND, speaking of flying by, we are approaching the **deadline** to sign up for the VFW National Home Fall Festival Bus Trip, scheduled for **October 24-26**. By the time you read this you’ll have about a week to sign up. Since the **deadline is September 27**, it’s probably best to use the **QR code** on the form elsewhere on this page to sign up right on the State website. If you have any difficulty, PLEASE contact VFW State HQ right away at 608-221-5276, and they will help you with the process.

We would love to see you on the bus to enjoy the festivities and for you to see our VFW National Home, so let’s get fired up and sign up! As I mentioned in my last column, those who have taken part in this trip over the years – many of you “repeat customers”- you know what a great time it is. Yes, the ride is a bit long, but the cama-

Carla McAndrew
National Home
VFW
608-763-0042
CarlaM@vfwwi.org



raderie and fun make it so very enjoyable. It is nice to spend time with old friends and comrades, and of course, make new friends too. And there are always fun activities on the bus that help us all learn more about the National Home.

This year’s theme, “Grease”, should be a lot of fun. As you can see, there are T-shirts for purchase if you would like that option too. The wonderful families at the VFW National Home are counting on us for a fun Fall Festival. Don’t delay – register to join us TODAY!

Support Our Troops

VFW VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS. Department of Wisconsin 2025 National Home Festival Party
Each person must complete a registration form for accountability
DATE: October 24-26, 2025
COST: \$330 for Adult Double Occupancy or \$495 for Single Adult Occupancy
Includes Bus transportation & Hotel stay at Quality Suites, Lansing, MI. Meals not included.
Discount if you register by August 11, 2025. \$300 for Double Adult Occupancy/\$455 Single Adult Occupancy
Children 12 and under \$75 Bus Fee
\$30 rebate available after trip if 40 people register for the bus trip by September 26, 2025.
Reservation Deadline: September 27, 2025
Pickup and drop-off location: Pickup starting at 6:00 AM at Cedar Creek Mall Parking Lot, Schofield, WI, TRAVELING DOWN THE Hwy 51/39 route. Other locations will be determined based on the amount of applications from different areas of the State of Wisconsin.
Room Type: Double Occupancy Single Occupancy Bus Ticket for Children 12 & Under
Name: VFW Post/Aux#: District#:
Address: City: State:
Phone #: Email:
(You will be contacted by Phone or email if pickup time changes)
Roommate Choice: (If you choose to room alone, Single Occupancy rate applies)
Grease Theme White T-shirt (sizes XS—4XL) \$20 QTY Size Shirts are unisex sizing
Grease Theme Black T-shirt (sizes XS—4XL) \$20 QTY Size Shirts are unisex sizing
Total Payment Due/enclosed:
Emergency Contact Information (Full Name and PH#):
Please provide vehicle information if leaving a vehicle at a pick up point. Make: Model: License Plate #
Points of Contact:
Carla McAndrew, 608-763-0042, carla.mcandrew@yahoo.com
Randy Engness, 715-651-0263, engnessr@gmail.com
Louise Engness, 715-308-9302, wagnerla4@gmail.com
Make all checks payable to:
VFW DEPT OF WISCONSIN
Earmark: 2025 National Home Bus Trip
Mail this form and check, if paying by check to:
VFW OF WISCONSIN
P.O. BOX 6128
MONONA, WI 53716-0128
~ OR ~
Register Online

TAPS TAPS TAPS TAPS TAPS TAPS TAPS TAPS

This listing reflects the most recent reporting of deceased members obtained from VFW National Headquarters. While every effort is made to provide accurate and timely information, it does not necessarily reflect the year of the members' passing. Please contact Editor Marla J. Morgan (wivfweditor@gmail.com) with any questions or corrections.

Post	Name	City	Post	Name	City	Post	Name	City	Post	Name	City
305	William Bauer	Eau Claire	2115	Robert Ellertson	Hudson	7233	John Duffy	Hayward	9719	Norbert Bluma	Green Bay
305	Vincent Statz	Chippewa Falls	2115	Lawrence Fercello	Saint Paul, MN	7444	Gerald Timm	Dunbar	9719	Everett Skar	Green Bay
328	Robert Olson, Sr.	Madison	2204	Raymond Kellogg	Cameron	7694	Dennis Kalschear	Sauk City	10171	James Niswonger	Grafton
388	John Writz	Wausau	2227	Richard Reis, Sr.	Unity	7784	George Graham	Deerfield	10262	Donald Wiernik	Junction City
659	Mary Greenwold	Manitowoc	2260	Roy Braatz	Oconomowoc	7896	Donald Kreul	Benton	10393	Royce Cornell	Ranchester, WY
659	Francis Orth	Manitowoc	2267	Richard Bartels	Muscoda	7908	Raymond Lord	Holmen	10405	Richard Johnson	Fall Creek
664	Elmer Nehring	Appleton	2312	Eben Robertson	Monroe	7908	James Williams	Holmen	10519	Donald Almquist	Greenfield
664	Gerald Sasse	Clintonville	2534	Earl Tilberg	Wisconsin Rapids	7929	Robert Willert	Turtle Lake	10568	James Brincka	Fond du Lac
1318	Robert Jacobson	Madison	2687	Richard Johnson	Tomahawk	8021	Verlin Ihle	Coon Valley	10568	William Hoyt	Spooner
1393	Kenneth Herman	Jackson	2778	Orville Crane	Greenville	8021	Richard Schneiderman	La Crosse	11038	Donald Gehl	Chilton
1393	Russell McCrimmon	Johnston, IA	2778	David Mueller	Appleton	8068	Wallace Wadzinski	Eland	11038	Lee Smith	Waterford
1580	Robert North	Vail, AZ	2925	Daryl Hanke	Pine River	8092	Wayne Kuslits	Oakfield	11244	Douglas Anderson	Waunakee
1621	Richard Harwick	Janesville	3319	Mark Hietpas	Greenville	8216	Norbert Lovata	Santa Fe, NM	11244	John Fabie	Madison
1621	Raymond Stafford	Janesville	3635	Ronald Helgren	Florence	8314	Alan Christopherson	Oconto Falls	11244	Gordon Faust	Waunakee
1638	Dennis Krenzke	Merrill	3635	Russell Vassar	Elk River, MN	8329	Roger Frank	Barnes	15051	Ernest Cathers	Shell Lake
1691	Ruben Navarro	Oak Creek	5274	Robert Hale	Platteville	8733	Harold Lyon	Kronenwetter	15051	Larry Densch	Arpin
1865	Harry Adamson	Union Grove	5274	David Stark	Glendale, AZ	8834	Alan Ojala	Hartford	15051	Herbert Hall	Sturgeon Bay
1866	James Maves	Marshfield	5373	Ray Gasser	Port Washington	9156	Douglas Crow	Mount Pleasant, SC	15051	William Herstowski	Argonne
1879	Robert Murphy	Milton	5612	Andrew Molkenthine	Plymouth	9156	William Shimek	Manitowoc	15051	Marvin Jacobson	Wild Rose
1908	Gordon Cady	Pickett	6352	Donald Landwehr	Marshfield	9510	Orvie Cook	Fox Lake	15051	Jake Wagner	Durand
1916	Terry Windsor	Blue River	6377	Herbert Hopp	Menomonee Falls	9510	Sam Kok	Randolph	15051	Albert Woulf	Coleman
2112	Larry Isensee	Sparta	6707	Wayne Schuette	Cleveland	9537	John Weber, Jr.	Pewaukee	15051	William Zoellick	Watertown

Deadline for the November 2025 issue is October 6.

Update on Our Wisconsin Heroes

As noted in the March/April 2025 NEWS, three more of our MIA Wisconsin Heroes were positively identified in the latter months of 2024. They have all been laid to rest this year:

• **PFC David C. Hansen** was accounted for on August 23, 2024. He died in the notorious Cabanatuan Prison camp in the Philippines, following the Fall of Bataan. PFC Hansen was buried on June 28, 2025, the 83rd anniversary of his death. A funeral service was held at Brookfield Congregational United Church of Christ, followed by a private burial with full military honors. He is survived by nieces Lynda Hansen Withbroe and Christine Hansen; nephews Dave (Annie) and Jeff (Joan) Hansen; and other extended family members. He was preceded in death by his father, his mother, two brothers, and numerous other family members died after him.

• **Pvt. Herbert E. McLaughlin** was accounted for on December 17, 2024. He was killed in the December 7, 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor, Hickam Field and Schofield Army Barracks, Hawaii. Pvt. McLaughlin, who is the namesake of VFW Post 2723 in Shawano, was honored in a graveside service with full military honors on Saturday, August 9, 2025 in Woodlawn Cemetery in Shawano. He is survived by a great-nephew Dean Seher, and distant cousin Susan Swinick, whose DNA helped identify him through his maternal lineage, and other extended family.

• **Lt. Col. Donald W. Downing** was accounted for on December 20, 2024. He was lost during a nighttime armed reconnaissance flight over Quang Binh Province, North Vietnam on September 5, 1967. He was declared KIA in April 1978. Born in Columbus, WI, he was a 1952 graduate of Janesville High School, and left a widow and four young children in Massachusetts. Lt. Col. Downing was buried in Arlington National Cemetery on June 30, 2025 with full military honors. He is in Section 75, Site 1603.

Additional Wisconsin Heroes accounted for include:

• **PFC Leon R. Karwacki** was accounted for on September 26, 2024. Born in Buffalo, New York in 1916, Karwacki entered the U.S. Army from Milwaukee and was assigned in late 1944 to Company E, 2nd Bn., 36th Armored Infantry Regiment, 3rd Armored Division. In mid-September, his Battalion advanced against enemy forces around Stolberg, Germany, between Aachen and the Hurtgen Forest. He was killed on September 17, at the age of 27, during an attack near the village of Mausbach, but his body could not be recovered due to the intensity of enemy fire.



PFC David Christian Hansen
6 January 1917
– 28 June 1942



Pvt. Herbert Elton McLaughlin
7 June 1910
– 7 December 1941



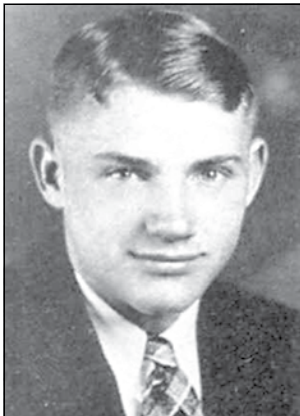
Lt. Col. Donald William Downing
17 March 1934
– 5 September 1967



PFC Leon R. Karwacki
26 November 1916
– 17 September 1944



PFC Lee I. Clendenning
1 May 1918
– 7 December 1941



Cpl. John J. Ginzl
6 December 1917
– 9 January 1945

His then-unidentified remains were recovered in late 1945 and interred at Henri-Chapelle American Cemetery in Belgium. Circumstantial evidence, along with dental and anthropological evidence were used for identification.

PFC Karwacki was laid to rest with full military honors nearly 81 years to the day, with a graveside service at St. Adalbert Cemetery in Milwaukee on September 10, 2025. He is at rest at last, next to his Polish-immigrant parents and some of his seven siblings. A rosette is placed next to his name on the Walls of the Missing at Netherlands American Cemetery to indicate he is accounted for.

• **PFC Lee I. Clendenning** was accounted for on March 11, 2025. Born in Rib Lake, WI in 1918, he was the middle son of three who all served in WWII. The eldest, Melvin, saw action in Africa and Italy. Lee and his younger brother Charles (Chuck) enlisted in the U.S. Army in Wausau on November 8, 1940. Both

were at Hickam Field in Hawaii on December 7, 1941. Lee was killed in the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor, Hickam Field and Schofield Barracks, while Chuck was wounded and unable to identify his brother. Chuck did make it home to Wisconsin.

Lee's then-unidentified remains were buried in Schofield Cemetery and later the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific (Punchbowl) in Honolulu. He was ultimately identified through DNA and other analysis. Full military honors were held at a graveside service on September 6, 2025, in the Lakeview Cemetery in Rib Lake. Lee is at rest near his parents, two brothers and other family members. He is survived by niece Gale Clendenning, nephews Lee and Melvin, and other extended family. A rosette is placed next to his name on the Tablets of the Missing at Honolulu Memorial, Honolulu, Hawaii, to indicate he is accounted for.

• **Cpl. John J. Ginzl** was accounted for on June 11, 2025. Posted biographical info is incomplete at this writing. He was born in the Town of Winchester in Vilas County in 1917 or 1918, and entered the U.S. Army Air Forces from Wisconsin, serving in the 17th Bombardment Squadron, 27th Bombardment Group. He was captured by enemy forces during the Japanese invasion of the Philippines and interned in a prison camp, until he was placed aboard the ship Oryoku Maru for transport to Japan.

Unaware that Allied POWs were on board, a U.S. carrier-borne aircraft attacked the Oryoku Maru, which eventually sank in Subic Bay. Ginzl was then transported to Takao, Formosa, known today as Taiwan, aboard the Enoura Maru. The Japanese reported that Ginzl was killed on Jan. 9, 1945, when U.S. forces sank the Enoura Maru. After the war, U.S. personnel exhumed a mass grave on a beach at Takao that contained the remains of U.S. service members. The remains could not be identified at the time and were interred as Unknowns at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific.

Cpl. Ginzl is memorialized on the Walls of the Missing at the Manila American Cemetery in the Philippines, where a rosette will be placed to indicate he is accounted for. Further information on his return to Wisconsin and final resting place will be shared upon publication.



S'MORE NEWS

We are at 90% in membership! Keep up the great work! Keep working towards our Department goal of 101%. I know we can obtain this! What a busy couple of months it has been! It has been a rewarding experience to connect with the Auxiliaries and gain insight into their significant contributions to their communities. I have also had the honor of distributing American flags to these Auxiliaries to replace those in need of updating. This initiative aligns with the efforts of our Americanism Chairman, Sally Lamers, to promote a spirit of patriotism across the state. It truly exemplifies the power of teamwork.

The Big Ten Conference will take place in Bettendorf, Iowa, on October 17–18. Our upcoming trip to The National Home for the annual meeting and Fall Festival is scheduled for October 24–26. This year’s festival theme is Grease, so we encourage everyone to don their costumes and participate. Whether you are a returning visitor or attending for the first time, there will always be new experiences to enjoy. It is heartening to witness the families benefiting from this remarkable facility as

Kim McWilliams
Department President
815-999-9214
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they work towards rebuilding their lives. [See info elsewhere in this issue. DEADLINE is September 27, 2025.]

The Fall Council of Administration meeting is scheduled to take place at the American Legion in Beaver Dam on November 15, 2025. Attendees are encouraged to don their favorite vintage Auxiliary uniforms, whether it be a hat, scarf, or other accessories, as there will be a drawing for participants. The agenda includes a training session alongside the business meeting and lunch.

Keep working together as “We Rise by Lifting Others”, “From Sea to Shining Sea, Honoring Veterans Who Keep Us Free”.

SCHOLARSHIPS DEADLINE IS OCTOBER 31

School is in full swing! Have you contacted your local schools and informed them where to get entries for the Voice of Democracy and Patriot’s Pen Student Essay Contests? There are several places:

- National websites: vfwauxiliary.org OR vfw.org
- State websites: vfwauxwi.org OR vfwwi.org
- ScholarsAPP.com

(See article in July VFW NEWS)

Remember, the deadline for both programs is October 31 (entries to the Post by midnight). The theme for both contests is: “How are you Showing Patriotism and Support for our Country?”

This is a joint effort with the VFW, so it’s great to work together in the judging. Gundel

Marge Southworth
Awards Chairman
715-551-3487
mdsouth2228@gmail.com

Metz is the Department Chairman on the VFW side – email: gmem54b4h@gmail.com.

Don’t forget certificates, etc. for participants. You can order some in the VFW Catalog or perhaps you have a member handy on the computer to create your own. There are also many nice student gifts for these programs.

I am here to help if I can. Don’t forget you also have a Chairman in your District.

AUXILIARY

SEEKING OUR MEMBERSHIP TREASURE

Vicki Newbauer
Membership Chairman
715-257-2099
vnewbauer1950@gmail.com

For **100** years, the Department of Wisconsin VFW Auxiliary has stood as a beacon of Caring for Heroes Yesterday Today Tomorrow!” A century of dedication, achievement and service to our Veterans, military, their families and our communities. That could not happen without a strong membership family. We must: *invite new members, include current members and invest in the future of our organization.*

Members of the VFW Auxiliary are the relatives of those who have served in overseas combat. Review the Eligibility Wheel and ask someone to join. Use the QR code and the Membership tools on MALTA. Continue your Veteran’s legacy by retaining your membership and recruiting new members, so they will continue to live on through you as a member of the VFW Auxiliary.

As we continue to cruise toward our next destination in Beaver Dam on November 15, there are treasures waiting to be claimed:

- **“#1” Award** – All Auxiliaries in each membership family group reaching **100% +** in membership by October 31, 2025 will be entered into a drawing to win \$50.
- **“Big Movement” Award** – All VFW and Auxiliary members who recruit five (5) new and/or rejoined members to the VFW Auxiliary by April 30, 2026 will be entered into a drawing to receive \$25.

Scuttlebutt has it that “Diddley” (District 9 President Kim Goss) is the big CHYTT on the cruise so far! She and her “Yuppies” are Dead Reckoning to the 100%+ treasure.

“All Hands on Deck” – transmit dues now!



Ruth Wilson Receives J. Frank Award

Ruth “Tootsie” Wilson, a 61-year member of the Badger VFW Auxiliary 328 in Stoughton, received the 2024-2025 Jeannette Frank Award at a recent presentation at the Post. Ruth was not able to attend the State Convention in June for health reasons. The Award recognizes an Auxiliary member for their outstanding continuous service of 25+ years, and is named in honor of Past Dept. and Past National President Jeannette Frank of Manitowoc.

Joining Auxiliary 328 in 1964 at the age of 31, through the service of her brother Gordon Eastman in WWII, Ruth is still an active presence at every fundraiser, memorial and the like, at 92 years *young*. She held many offices including President and Conductress and offered her baking and food service talents for many events over the years.

A well-respected role model and mentor in the Auxiliary and the Stoughton community, Ruth noted, “It is an honor to receive this award. I’ve proudly served as a member of the Stoughton VFW Auxiliary 328 for 61 years, and I have met many wonderful people who have become lifelong friends. Thank you all!”

Celebrating in Stoughton are (from left): 2024-25 Aux. Awards Chairman Helen Stearns, PDP; Ruth “Tootsie” Wilson; Aux. 328 Treasurer Lisa Olson who nominated Ruth; PDP Cheryl Woodards. Congratulations Ruth, and thank you for your service to Veterans!

With thanks to Helen Stearns and Lisa Olson for info and photo.

DRAPING OF THE CHARTER

This listing reflects names as of the most recent reporting of deceased members. While every effort is made to provide accurate and timely information, depending on when the member was reported (or not), it does not necessarily reflect the year of their passing. **Treasurers:** please remember to report your deceased Sisters and Brothers in a timely fashion so we can honor them and their service with this final tribute.

Aux.	Name	City	Aux.	Name	City
659	Marilyn Wazny	Manitowoc	7534	Darlene Rodriguez	Marinette
1318	Jean C. Hahn*	La Crosse	7591	Mary Steinhofer*	Monona
1318	Lucy J. Jenkins*	Middleton	7692	Anna M. DeCoster*	Appleton
1621	Diane M. Harrier*	Janesville	7753	Gail Carviou	Manitowoc
1621	Lavon R. Johnson	Janesville	7753	Patricia Holdorf*	Manitowoc
1638	Donna Scheu*	Bayside	8068	Marlene Matteson*	Elderon
1707	Phyllis Greenwood	St. Petersburg, FL	8123	Elaine Baker*	De Soto
1879	Katherine I. Young	Cambridge	8512	Gayle M. Hughes	Turtle Lake
3032	Janet A. Roou*	Viroqua	8512	Glennis R. Lynch*	Comstock
3032	Lois Tryggestad	Viroqua	8527	Vernell Rodman	Athens
3709	Dawn Schwefel	Watertown	8718	Verla Bengsch	Westfield
5729	Janet M. Cardinal*	Withee	9156	Mary Cappelle*	Sheboygan
6707	Eunice Wusterbarth*	Kiel	9156	Susan A. Karlik*	Decatur, AL
7221	Joy L. Marks*	Grand Chute	9156	Rose Rommelfaenger*	Racine
7300	Dolores Kempf	Park Falls	10262	Beverly Sleeter*	Wis. Rapids
7300	Penny Lepkowicz	Butternut	15051	Marcella Langkamp*	Lancaster
7534	Theresa Kennedy	Green Bay	15051	Charlene Voelker*	Waupun

* DENOTES LIFE MEMBER

FROM THE CHIEF-OF-STAFF

We are a couple of months into the current command year and so far, we have successfully raised enough funds to assist 21 Veterans and their spouses with our Joint Special Project! The Auxiliary and the VFW each have an ambitious goal of supporting 100 Veterans and spouses. We are poised to tackle this ambitious goal. Your continued efforts are vital in this endeavor so please engage with your communities to help us achieve our objectives. If each Auxiliary could contribute or secure donations of \$500, we would reach our target. Our heartfelt gratitude to those who have

Sherrie Rosenau
Chief-of-Staff
920-251-8888
littlemama6@yahoo.com



already contributed, whether through their Auxiliaries or personally. Your support is invaluable and deeply appreciated. Remember, "We Rise by Lifting Others".



Displaying some of the 13 National Awards for 2024-2025 announced at the Convention in Columbus, OH, are (l-r) Chief-of-Staff Linda Moran; Youth Activities Chair Patty Jansky and Circle of Excellence Dept. President Cheryl Woodards. The complete list of Awards and recipients is noted below. Thank you PDP Rita Byers for the photo.

WI Auxiliary Receives 13 Awards at National

Once again, the Awards Presentations at National Convention did not disappoint the Wisconsin Delegation. Dept. President Cheryl Woodards led the way on Saturday evening with her induction into the Circle of Excellence, receiving a medallion and scarf, and \$500 Award for the Department.

Competing again in Program Division 7 (New Jersey, North Carolina, Washington and Wisconsin), five Wisconsin Chairmen and two Auxiliaries received ten total recognitions, in seven different Programs. Rounding out the list were two Department Membership Awards as well. A very productive Convention – we are Wisconsin proud!

Congratulations to ALL recipients listed below – and those throughout the Department who supported them with outstanding participation in our programs in 2024-2025. Keep up the hard work!



Special congratulations to Patty Jansky of Auxiliary 1038 in Chippewa Falls who earned her FIFTH CONSECUTIVE, First Place Outstanding Youth Activities Chairman Award. We are SO proud of you, and grateful for your leadership and hard work! Thank you again Rita!

THE HIGHGROUND FUNDRAISER

PTSD RETREATS FOR VETERANS & SPOUSES

\$500 to Sponsor One Veteran or Spouse

CAMPFIRE FOR COURAGE

Joint Goal: \$100,000 to Sponsor 200 Veterans or Spouses

Mail checks to:

Department of WI VFWA

Lenore Otto - Treasurer

1383 W. Wisconsin Ave.

Oconomowoc, WI 53066

Earmark:

President's Special Project

Dept. of Wisconsin VFW & Auxiliary

2025-2026 Joint Project

2024-2025 Award Winners			
Circle of Excellence President Cheryl Woodards Medallion & Scarf \$500 to Dept.	Membership Dept. of Wisconsin Silver Award – 98% by March 31 - \$250 Gold Award – 100% by June 30 - \$300		
Veterans & Family Support Kathleen Lendosky First Place Outstanding Performance \$200 to Dept., Keepsake	Youth Activities Patty Jansky First Place Outstanding Performance \$200 to Dept., Keepsake		
Chief-of-Staff/Extension Linda Moran Second Place Outstanding Performance \$100 to Dept., Citation	Legislative Deb Nackers Second Place Outstanding Performance \$100 to Dept., Citation		
Veterans & Family Support Kathleen Lendosky Best Promo – Suicide Awareness \$25 VFW Store Cert.	“Buddy”® Poppy VFW National Home Susan Carlson Best Promo – Poppy Education \$25 VFW Store Cert.		
Youth Activities Patty Jansky Best Promo – Youth & Vets Reading \$25 VFW Store Cert.	Americanism Aux. 1038 Chippewa Falls Best Event – Lesser-known Holidays \$25 Award, Citation		
Hospital Aux. 1038 Chippewa Falls Creative Interaction w/Vet Patients \$25 Award, Citation	Youth Activities Aux. 5729 Medford Best Event – Youth & Vets Reading \$25 Award, Citation		



Our Wisconsin Veterans Home at King

ABOVE: One of the many comprehensive displays in the Veterans Museum in the lower level of the WI Veterans Home at King.

TOP RIGHT: State Commander Ty Letto captures part of the group prior to a Hospital meeting and visit at WVH King on September 10.

AT RIGHT: This beautiful bench is a pleasant and welcoming addition to the exterior of the Marden Center.



Combined group visits to our Hospitals and Veterans Homes are always a fun experience. Above, Officers and Hospital Representatives and Deputies from the VFW, Auxiliary and WI MOC Grand gather for a group photo prior to their tour.

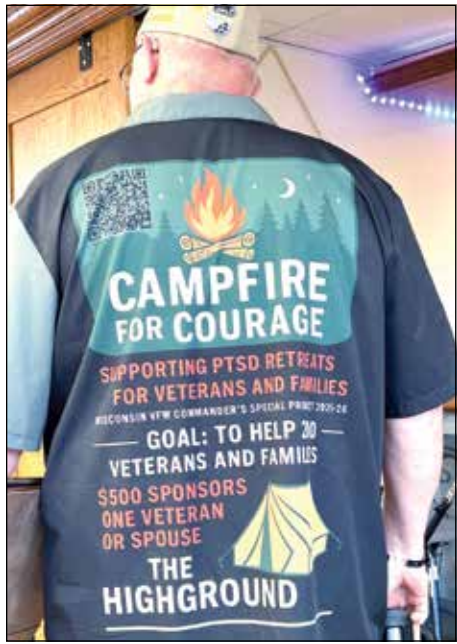
Combined Group Visits Zablocki VAMC in Milwaukee

The Simulation Center at Zablocki VAMC was a fascinating part of the day's tour. Established in 2016, the 5,000 sq. ft. "Sim" center is on the 10th floor at Zablocki, and it provides a safe learning environment for employees to practice their skills at all experience levels and in a wide range of simulation events and environments.



A Zablocki employee explains the comprehensive range of medical equipment and supplies available to enrich the learning experiences. It all adds up to better-equipped and trained personnel and enhanced patient safety.

Got QR Code, Will Advertise



It beats handing out flyers... and with the proliferation of cell phones, probably boosts donations considerably! Keep an eye open for Cdr. Letto's beautiful shirt, touting the Campfire for Courage Joint Special Project, complete with a perfect QR code in the upper left for easy-peasy donations. Whatever it takes to get the mission accomplished!

Commander Gets Right to Work in Tomahawk



There is not a lot of "down time" when a VFW Post is holding a breakfast. Here, Cdr. Ty Letto gets right to work on the serving line at VFW Post 2687 in Tomahawk. The Friday morning breakfast was part of the many events at the 44th Annual Fall Ride weekend.



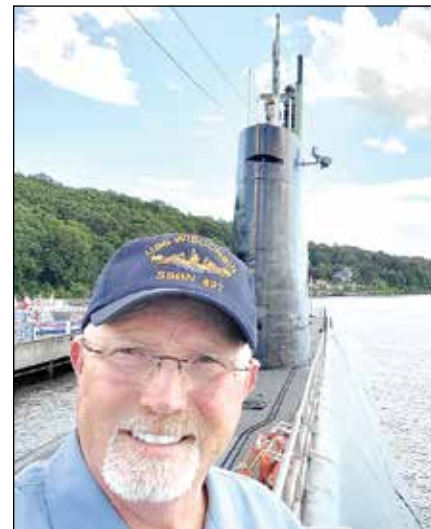
The USS Constitution is the world's oldest commissioned warship afloat, launching on October 21, 1797. It is now located in the Boston National Historical Park, as part of the Charlestown Navy Yard. Operated by the U.S. Navy, "Old Ironsides" is open for free public tours throughout the year. See more at: [USS CONSTITUTION INFO](#).



It doesn't take much to imagine the smoke, noise and intensity of battle when viewing the Gun Deck. "Old Ironsides" was undefeated.



We wonder if our Submariners found the Constitution's Sleeping Quarters a little more spacious and airy than the accommodations they experienced?



ABOVE: It's just a "stone's throw" from RI to the Submarine Force Museum and the USS Nautilus (SSN-571) in Groton, CT. "First and Finest", the Nautilus was the world's first nuclear powered submarine, commissioned on 30 September 1954. The successful development of a nuclear propulsion plant changed the scope and use of submarines. TOP LEFT: It looks like this U.S. Army Veteran is pretty impressed with submarines too. BOTTOM LEFT: Looking positively joyous, our two Submariners revel in the tour of the U.S. Naval Submarine School, also in Groton.



As noted in the July WI VFW NEWS, Keel Laying of the USS Wisconsin SSBN 827 was held on her hull number date, August 27. Two of our Dept.'s former Submariners, Randy Engness and Steve Eisenhauer, accompanied State Cdr. Ty Letto to the private ceremony hosted by General Dynamics Electric Boat at their Quonset Point, RI, facility. The recording of the event is still available at the USS Wisconsin SSBN 827 Association website: [USS WISCONSIN KEEL LAYING CEREMONY](#). Take some time to check out this fascinating next step in "our sub's" timeline.

Celebrating at Post 2267

One of Cdr. Letto's first trips in the Dept. in July was a journey to Bower-Gunnill-Dalton VFW Post 2267 in Richland Center, to meet newly-elected Commander Marlin Clark and visit with the membership. Ty said, "Visiting Posts and Districts is the best part of my job as CDR because I get to see firsthand the great work that is being done by the VFW in our communities across the State."

He continued, "I applaud Post 2267 for all their hard work and point out a program that they run to distribute military branch hats to new incoming patients to the four nursing homes in their community. Post 2267 is 'Making It Count' in the lives of Veterans every day!" Ty also presented Cdr. Clark with his State Commander's Coin. Also pictured are (l-r): District 3 Cdr. John Scanlan and Immediate Past Post Cdr. Marge Freeman.





PSC Bill Hustad Honored at Madison VAMC Event

The Purple Heart Hall of Honor at William S. Middleton VAMC in Madison honors Veterans awarded the Purple Heart for combat injuries sustained during their service. This year's Induction of the Class of 2025 was held on Purple Heart Day, August 7. Five inductees were honored, including WIPSC William "Bill" Hustad of New Glarus Memorial VFW Post 10549. Sgt. Hustad served as an infantryman with the 101st Airborne Division in Vietnam. He was wounded while on patrol near a small village. Bill is active in many Veterans organizations besides the VFW; he also served as State Commander of the Military Order of the Purple Heart

(MOPH) in 2009-2010, two years after his VFW term of office, and MOC Grand Cdr. in 2013-2014.

A number of comrades and family members attended the Induction, including PSC Joel Walker, shown above with (from left): PSC Bill Hustad; U.S. Army Pvt. Warren Schuster (Korean War) of Oshkosh; U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class William Maves (OIF), who is a member of Post 2708 in Edgerton; U.S. Army Spc. Gary Johnson (Vietnam) of Madison. The fifth Inductee (posthumous) was U.S. Marine Corps Lance Cpl. Jacob Meinert, who was KIA by an IED in Helmand Province, Afganistan. *Thank you to PSCs Joel Walker and Bill Hustad.*

Auxiliary 9677 Fills 50 Backpacks



Many amazing and generous donations from members made Winiecki VFW Auxiliary 9677's second annual Back to School Project in Bellevue a rousing success. Above, Auxiliary member and Project Coordinator Nickey Ciha delivers 50 filled backpacks to Nicolet Elementary School in Green Bay. Not pictured are Post 9677 member Lloyd Siebert and Auxiliary member Pat Siebert helping with the delivery. Nice job Bellevue! *Thanks to Pat Siebert.*



From the Kaukauna Fire Dept. are (from left): Lt. Nick Bouressa; D/O Ryan Kusow; Fire Chief Jake Carrel; Post 3319 Cdr. Michael Weaver; D/O Austin Klister; FF/Paramedic Ray Shanle.

Post 3319 Offers Thanks and Recognition

Electric City VFW Post 3319 in Kaukauna is a proud community service partner, and they know the importance of thanking and recognizing those who also support the community. This past summer, the Post presented Appreciation Awards to both the Kaukauna Fire Dept. and Kaukauna Police Dept., for all of their efforts in coordinating the city's Memorial Day and Veterans Day

ceremonies each year.

They also sponsored a send-off luncheon to support the soldiers of the 127th Infantry of the WI Army National Guard, prior to their deployment to the Middle East. *From Post 3319 Cdr. Mike Weaver, with many thanks to another Kaukauna "community partner", Brian Roebke, Editor of the Heart of the Valley Times-Villager.*

AT RIGHT: The Kaukauna Police Dept. presentation included (from left): Chief Jamie Graff; Post 3319 Cdr. Michael Weaver; Officer Mike Lambie; Officer Caleb Lyons.

BELOW: Several Post 3319 members and deploying WIARNG troops pause for a photo during the Post's send-off luncheon. Godspeed to our soldiers.



Post 2267 Richland Center Supports UW MIA Project

At their June meeting, Bower-Gunnill-Dalton VFW Post 2267 in Richland Center voted to donate \$500 to the University of Wisconsin Missing in Action Recovery and Identification Project (UW MIA RIP), which honors the sacrifice of brave Americans who paid the ultimate price for our freedoms. Members present included (front row, l to r): Joe Harsha and Kevin Novy; (second row, l to r) then-Commander Marge Freeman, QM Larry Sebranek, Steve Walton; (third row, l to r) Dallas Johnson, Incoming Junior Vice Troy Rinehart, Incoming Commander Marlin Clark, Hugo Santiago and Adjutant/Chaplain Ron Krue.

Initially chartered in December 1931 as Bower-Gunnill VFW Post 2267, Dalton was added in April 1945. The three namesakes are Richland County area residents: William A. Bower served in the Philippine-American War in 1900;



Carl T. Gunnill lost his life in the Battle of Chateau-Thierry in WWI; Malcolm C. Dalton died in a B-24 crash during WWII while bombing oil fields in Romania.

The Post is very proud to support

UW MIA RIP's mission and focus as a DPAA strategic partner, with emphasis on the recovery and identification of MIA service members from Wisconsin. *Thanks to Marge Freeman for the photo and info.*



Post 9677 members Dave Mikouski, Lloyd Siebert and new Auxiliary member James Neuens volunteered at the "Pizza hole", with Hank Kollross "assisting" from the golf cart. Golfers eat pizza and place a bet on their golf distance for coupons off pizza from local business sponsor, Chicago Street Pub.



Post 9677 members Travis Gee and Dennis Raisleger handled the Veterans' Welcome and Recruiting table.

Winiecki Post 9677 Holds Annual Golf Fundraiser

Winiecki VFW Post 9677 in Bellevue held another successful Annual Golf Fundraiser in early August. Many local businesses were sponsors and 36 four-person teams participated. Many Post and Auxiliary members volunteered for the day to handle registration, raffles and other tasks. No info was provided on donations made or received, but congratulations on another success. *Courtesy of Auxiliary 9677 Treasurer Pat Siebert.*



Elderon Post 8068 Celebrates Land Donation

Elderon Memorial VFW Post and Auxiliary 8068 members gathered recently to celebrate a donation of land for building a new Post home. Peggy Breske, (white shirt, next to the Banner Bearer), one of the original Auxiliary members, gifted the parcel in honor of her son, Mark Woyak. We will share additional information as it becomes available. Congratulations, and thank you Peggy! Submitted by Auxiliary 8068 member Dianne Chaignot.



A young patron colors a greeting for a hospitalized Veteran.



A future Veteran?

Post 10519 Spreads the Word in Greendale

Greendale VFW Post 10519 proudly sponsored the Greendale Downtown Market in early August. Along with sharing information about the VFW and Auxiliary, Post members brought Army gear for residents to try on; giveaways for adults and kids; and special coloring pages for children, which will be shared with Veterans at the Clement J. Zablocki VA.

The six volunteers enjoyed engaging with market visitors, teaching them about Army equipment, and spreading the word about the many impactful initiatives Post 10519 supports throughout the Milwaukee area year-round. *Thanks to John Ustruck and Kristin Dodds.*

Post 8278 Honors Three with Quilts of Valor

Clements-Anderson-Leis VFW Post 8278 in Bangor again honored three area Veterans with Quilts of Valor (QOV) during the community's Independence Day observation. QOV was started in 2003 to "cover service members and Veterans touched by war with comforting and healing Quilts of Valor." Over 10,000 volunteer members in all fifty states have awarded over 4,000 handmade quilts to date. QOV emphasizes this is an award, not a gift.

This year's recipients included: WWII U.S. Navy Veteran Larry Hubert of West Salem, who served in Manila, Philippines onboard the USS Hope medical ship; Korean War U.S. Marine Corps Veteran Robert Dempsey of Onalaska who served in Korea in the Supply Depot for the 11th Regiment; Vietnam War U.S. Army Veteran Dale Saley from Bangor who served as a Heavy Equipment Operator in an Engineer Construction Unit near Saigon.

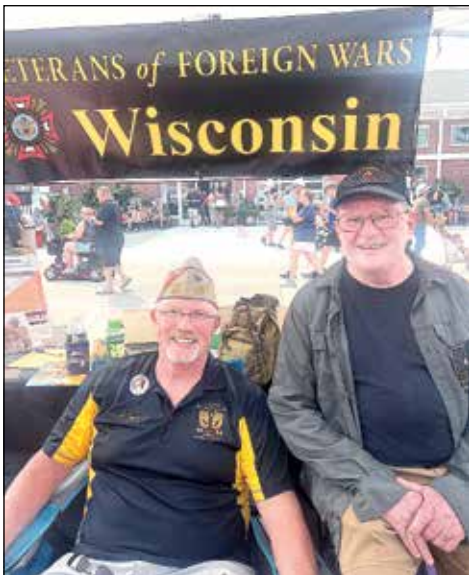
QOV State Coordinator Karen Demaree from Platteville wrapped each quilt around the recipients' shoulders with thanks for their service saying, "... the



Honoring Veterans in Bangor were (from left): State Quilts of Valor Coordinator Karen Demaree; Larry Hubert (WWII); Robert Dempsey (Korean War); Dale Saley (Vietnam War); Post 8278 Adjutant and local QOV Chairman Gary Althoff; Post 8278 Cdr. John Thorsen.

quilt we are awarding you is meant to offer comfort, warmth, peace, and healing, and to let you know you are forever in our hearts." Submitted by Gary Al-

thoff with sincere thanks to John A. P. Gessner, U.S. Army Colonel (RET), and Staff Reporter for the Monroe County Herald for photo and info assistance.



AT LEFT: Just some of the team “Recruiting Wisconsinbly” (from left): Paul Morrison; Randy Weyer; Michele Rathke; Jim Cairo; Miki Cairo; Brent Hibbard.
ABOVE LEFT: Michele Rathke (center) welcomes two new Air Force Veterans to the VFW.
ABOVE CENTER: State Commander Ty Letto (left) and D4 Cdr. Alex Kaleta take a breather at the Expo Booth.
ABOVE RIGHT: Opening Ceremonies at the Armed Forces Day Salute to Veterans.

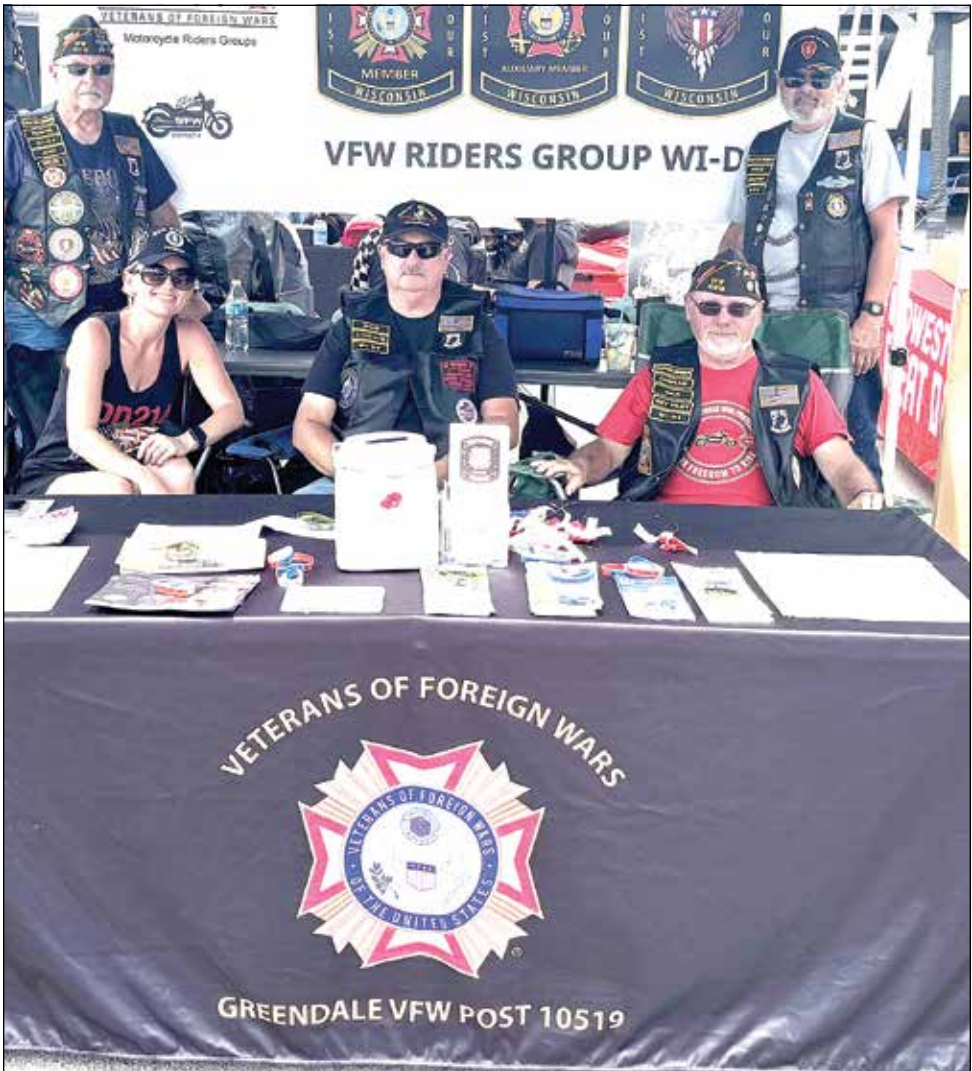
Getting it Done at the WI State Fair

After a recent “Passing of the Torch” from longtime State Fair Chairman Don Lynch, PSC to Doug DeLaurier of Post 1691, another State Fair success is in the books. With both an Armed Forces Day booth, and an Expo Fair booth, the active and well-scheduled teams of volunteers kept the energy flowing and the recruiting happening, with 20 new members signed. Kudos to all for your hard work and dedication!
Thanks to Carla McAndrew and Michele Rathke for info and photos.

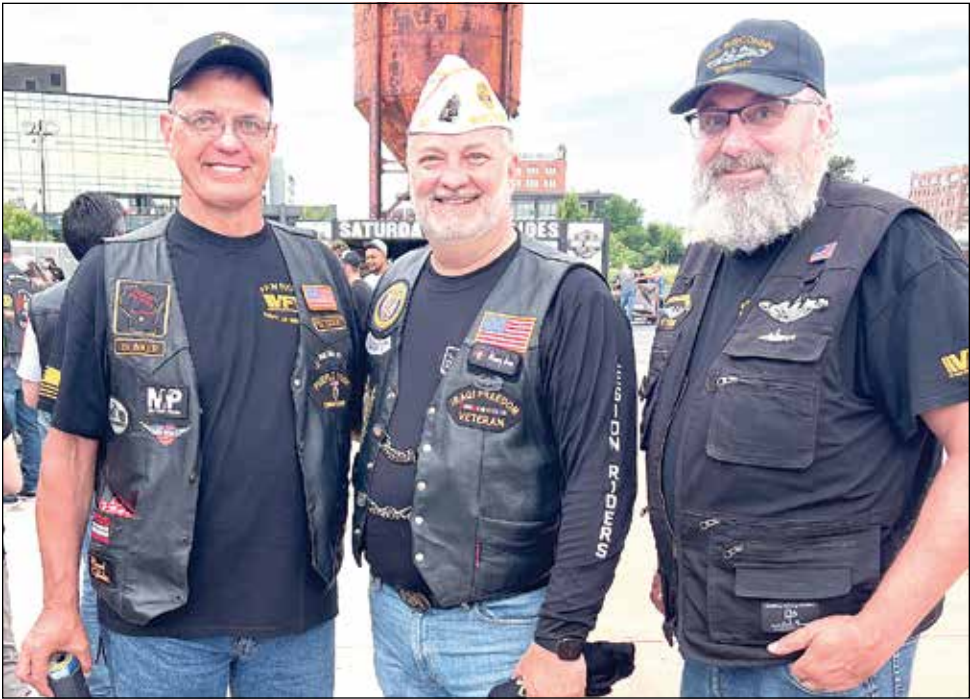
Harley Homecoming 2025 in Greenfield

Another great mid-July Harley Homecoming is in the books and the VFW collaboration was evident. The House of Harley in Greenfield put on a big show with music, vendors, food and partying, and they are very Veteran friendly. Department Membership Recruiters, Greendale VFW Post 10519 and the District 4 Riders Group provided a total of 12 volunteers, who logged 159.5 hours staffing the booth.

While there are always lots of folks from out of state, many good contacts were made to spread the word for the VFW. The weather through all was a spectrum of heat, rain, thunderstorms and more, but nothing stopped the party.
Thanks to all for representing us Wisconsinbly! And thanks to PSC Michele Rathke, Paul Morrison and John Ustruck of Post 10519 for photos and info.



Taking a photo break at the Harley Homecoming are (seated from left): Post 10519’s newest member, Joanna Ledvina; Bob Schweiger of the Riders Group and Hales Corners/Franklin Post 10394; Dan Workenaour of the Riders Group and Greendale VFW Post 10519. Standing are Post 10519 Cdr. and Riders Group member John Ustruck (left) and Mike Simmons of the Riders Group and Oak Creek VFW Post 8482.



Dept. Membership Committee members Paul Morrison of Post 2534 (left) and Randy Engness of Post 2204 chat with an American Legion comrade. Paul and Randy also spent time on stage at the Harley Museum with our VFW friend Jesse James Dupree, promoting the Harley-Davidson “Let’s Ride Challenge,” on now through October 31. H-D Riders are encouraged to register at a participating dealer in the state, selecting “VFW” as their sponsor. Depending on the miles logged collectively, H-D will donate up to \$100,000 to the VFW.



Just a glimpse, of a tiny portion, of “Hog Heaven”...



Recruiting Wisconsinbly in Plover



The Celebrate Plover event in late July is the perfect time to make community members aware of who you are and what you do. Plover VFW 10262 did just that, with members engaging with Veterans who visited their booth. Post member Tim Bubla also circulated throughout the fairgrounds to meet-and-greet those who may not have made their way to the business vendor area, as the Post was placed a bit “off the beaten path”. Sounds like it was “Wisconsinbly” successful as they came away with nine applications filled out and signed to complete with DD-214 paperwork. Job well done! LEFT: Post 10262 Commander Barbara McCloy (center) and member Larry Kinyon speak with a Veteran at Celebrate Plover. RIGHT: Post 10262 member Tim Bubla assists an Iraq War Veteran in filling out an application for VFW membership. Thanks to Debbie Manthey of Auxiliary 10262.



2025 Fall Legislative Conference

Department Legislative Chairs PSC Jason Johns (National) and Chaplain Jordan Tilleson (State) represented Wisconsin at the Fall Legislative Committee meeting in Washington, D.C., September 7-11. Jason is also CiC Carol Whitmore’s National Legislative Chairman. The session is similar to the March Washington Conference, but with more specific preparation and Committee work. Of course, Wisconsin had the added “bonus” of SVCiC Cory Geisler’s attendance, with his counterpart, National Sr. Vice President Donna Mills. Job well done team! *Many thanks to Jordan Tilleson for photos and info.*

TOP LEFT: Meeting with U.S. Rep. Glenn Grothman (R,WI-6, second from right) are (l-r): SVCiC Geisler; SVP Mills; PSC Johns; Chaplain Tilleson.

MIDDLE LEFT: Chairmen Johns (left) and Tilleson meet with U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) and two staffers.

BOTTOM LEFT: U.S. Rep. Derrick Van Orden (R, WI-3) received a VFW Life Saving Award following his actions rendering lifesaving medical aid to an 11-year-old boy seriously hurt in a car crash in Iowa on August 19. Presenting the Award to the former Navy Seal and Combat Medic are (l-r): D.C. Office Director Ryan Gallucci; CiC Carol Whitmore; Rep. Van Orden; SVCiC Cory Geisler; JVCiC Glenn Umberger, Jr.

BELOW: A “Fearless Four-some” selfie outside the Longworth Building.

AT RIGHT: Our Legislative Chairs outside the VFW D.C. Office – dapper from head to toe!



Cootie Corner

Listen Cooties:

I'd like to start out by congratulating Tracy Woodman on being elected Supreme Blanket Bum (Sr. Vice Commander) for 2025 – 2026. Congratulations also to Cory Geisler on being elected as the VFW National Sr. Vice Commander.

MOCA Grand President Connie Lindloff and I have scheduled our hospital visits. Special thanks to Grand Hide Gimlet Manny Salas for doing Union Grove and Past Grand Commander Lewis Lindloff for covering Chippewa Falls and King. Milwaukee is scheduled for September and Iron Mountain for October. We are still waiting on a con-



Greetings everyone:

Since last time I have managed to return from Supreme Convention with some awards to present to members at Tomah Days. I have also visited Wisconsin Veterans Homes and VA Hospitals at King, Chippewa Falls, Union Grove, Tomah and Milwaukee, presenting checks at each one. It's been great to be able to see these facilities again. Also, two inspections have been done and I've been busy finishing up everything else.

A few reminders to mention:

- Don't forget to get your dues in. Remember VFWA dues have to be paid first.
- Audits are due in October; send them to MOCA Grand Treasurer Dolores Sorensen.
- Your new Supreme Commander is Eric Bell and Supreme President is Dave Johnson.
- This year both MOC and MOCA will be once again supporting the Big Boot Program to help cut the Veteran suicide rate and raise awareness.
- The National Home Special Project will also be joint for the MOC and MOCA - the Apiary (Beekeeping) Program and helping the Supportive Farming Program grow. More information in the program book.

**Brian
Rickmann**
MOC Grand
Commander

608-290-2588
bcteb3@gmail.com



firmation from Madison.

We had another fantastic Tomah Days weekend recently. Thank you to all who attended and thanks to Wayne and Tracy Woodman for putting it together. "Keep 'em Smiling in Beds of White"!

Brian Rickmann
WI Grand Commander



**Connie
Lindloff**
MOCA Grand
President

262-215-7074
lindloffs@hotmail.com



• Supreme President Special Project is Veterans Legacy/ Camp ALMA.

• Supreme President Message is "ALL VETS LIVES MATTER", let's focus on our Veterans to support them in their care needs.

• Remember the 90th Annual Tomb Trek at Arlington National Cemetery, October 31-November 2, 2025. Please make sure you place your wreath order. Always remember to "Keep 'em Smilin' in Beds of White". Condolences to those who have lost a loved one. Get well wishes to those who are ill. Congratulations to those who are celebrating Birthdays and Anniversaries.

Connie Lindloff
WI Grand President

COOTIE CORNER

MOC Honors Rickard Oberst

MOC Grand of Wisconsin Hide Gimlet (JVC) Manny Salas (left) recently presented Rickard Oberst of VFW Post 11038 in Rochester with the Knights Hospitalier Gold Medalion. The recognition was awarded for superior effort on behalf of the MOC, for exceptional service performed at the Wisconsin Veterans Home at Union Grove. Rickard logs hundreds of hours a year at Union Grove and is also an active member of the Honor Guard, providing military honors at the Southern WI Veterans Memorial Cemetery, also in Union Grove. Submitted by D1 Cdr. Jim Cairo.



Zablocki VAMC Visit and Donation



Wisconsin MOC Grand Commander Brian Rickmann joined in the VFW and Auxiliary group visit to the Clement J. Zablocki VAMC in Milwaukee recently. Above, he presents Executive Director James D. McLain with a donation. Thanks to Cdr. Ty Letto for the photo!

COOTIE CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| Oct. 31-Nov. 2 | 90th MOC/MOCA Tomb Trek to the Argonne Cross and Tomb of the Unknowns, Arlington, VA
(Visit lotcs.org for registration, wreath orders and info.) |
| December 4-7 | Cootie Christmas at the VFW National Home – Eaton Rapids, MI
(Visit lotcs.org for details – deadline is November 14.) |
| January 9-11, 2026 | MOC/MOCA Grand Mid-Winter Conference – Janesville, WI
(Watch Cootie e-mailings and future papers for info.) |
| April 10-12, 2026 | MOC/MOCA Grand Convention – Green Bay, WI
(Watch Cootie e-mailings and future papers for details.) |



MOC Grand Raffle Tickets Are Available NOW

Tickets are \$2 each or 3/\$5
Seven prizes totaling \$1,000
will be drawn on April 11, 2026
at the WI Grand Convention!

For tickets, contact:

MOC Raffle Chair "Twiggy" Johnson
920-766-1491 or wilfredjohnson@gmail.com

SAVE THE DATES!

Wisconsin MOC & MOCA Mid-Winter Conference January 9 – 11, 2026

Baymont by Wyndham
616 Midland Rd.
Janesville, WI 53546

\$89.95 plus taxes
Call 608-758-4545 to make your reservation
Mention the MOC

Watch Cootie emailings and future
papers for meal and agenda details.

BITS & PIECES

A compendium of things new and noteworthy ...

- **Kudos** to Germantown VFW Post 9202 and De Pere VFW Post 2113 who have been included in recent issues of Checkpoint, a monthly digital “mini-publication” from VFW National. Email magazine@vfw.org to sign up to receive it.
- REMINDER! The **WI VFW NEWS** Sweepstakes tickets are due to State HQ by September 29! *Thank you for your support!*
- **Congratulations** to State Honor Guard member Daryl Booth of Post 2113 who was part of an Ashwaubenon Paramedics team that saved a man’s life using a high-tech device called the LUCAS to shock his heart and get him to St. Vincent Hospital. *Thank you for your service, then and now!*
- The **“CHEERS TO 100 YEARS”** for the Department of Wisconsin VFW Auxiliary continues with a special vintage Auxiliary uniform event at the Fall C of A meeting on November 15. *Check out the details in the September emailing!*
- **Did you know** that EIGHT of the 100 Auxiliaries in our Department are comprised of **ALL LIFE MEMBERS**? Which means they *START* the year on July 1 at 100%! What a concept: no chasing down those annual dues. Kudos to 388 Wausau; 2119 Mountain; 5828 Clear Lake; 7232 Eau Claire; 7753 Mishicot; 8123 DeSoto; 8584 Cashton; 10911 Camp Douglas. **Go Life!**



U.S. Navy Veteran (ret) Frederick Heil (left) and Betty Southworth of Stratford VFW Post and Auxiliary 6352 display the vintage scuba tanks used by Betty’s late husband Major John A. Southworth. The tribute honors John’s service in the 10th Special Forces Group. Editor photo.

Vintage Scuba Gear Honors Service

A beautiful tribute to the 20+ years of service of the late John A. Southworth of Stratford is now hanging proudly in the VFW Post 6352 home. John enlisted in 1956, and retired as a Major in 1976, serving with the U.S. Army 10th Special Forces Group in Vietnam. His vintage scuba tanks were used to train on the Underwater Demolition Team, (precursor to the U.S. Navy Seals) in Tegernsee, a cold-water lake in the Bavarian Alps in southern Germany. His team also trained Greek soldiers in 1963.

After John passed away in 2021 at age 84, his wife Betty Southworth decided to give the gear to Post 6352 comrade and U.S. Navy Veteran (ret) Frederick Heil, who is a recreational scuba diver. Fred worked with his friend Randy Koch of Marshfield to mount the tanks, along with John’s belt, photo and other items on a custom-made wood plaque. The result is a wonderful remembrance of not only John’s military service, but his community service as a Sixth Grade educator; School



The tribute includes a photo of John during his Vietnam service, as well as his belt and other personal items. Editor photo.

Board Member; and very active VFW Officer and member, especially with the Patriot’s Pen and Voice of Democracy youth programs. He is greatly missed.

**Thank you to
Wisconsin Posts
for their support of
the VFW NEWS.**

For more information on Post Booster Ads, contact Editor Marla J. Morgan at: wivfweditor@gmail.com.

**GROSS-YAKSH
Post 6498**

Home Post of
Past Cdrs-in-Chief
Walter G. Hogan
and the late
Tommy “T” Tradewell

11/21

FROM THE EDITOR

“Leadership is an action,
not a position.”
~ Donald McGannon, Chairman
Westinghouse Broadcasting Co.

And we say it every fall, “Wow, the summer went by FAST!” It was another great, high-energy summer with many wonderful new activities and events throughout the Department. Let’s keep up that effort and enthusiasm! Do check out the many interesting items in this issue – and adopt those nifty ideas for your own Post/Auxiliary and community. That’s working smarter, not harder...

Please review the **Events and Deadlines on page 18**, and be especially mindful of the **October 31 deadline** for Patriot’s Pen, Voice of Democracy and Teacher of the Year entries. Just a few short weeks left to make sure that your entries received so far are in order.

Marla Morgan
Editor

VFW

715-384-2500
wivfweditor@gmail.com



Be sure to mark your calendar to attend your District meeting. We’ve seen the power of the members’ voices and votes on the National level; it starts at the Post, and grows to Districts and Departments. These meetings are your opportunity to be a positive part of the organization.

Stay safe and well, and continue to “Make it Count”.

Inform. Inspire. Invite.

Greetings, VFW members!

Congratulations to your newly elected State Commander, Ty Letto! In July, we met in my office to discuss ways to work together and new initiatives to benefit everyone in our state’s Veteran community.

Talking with Commander Letto and hearing his ideas for ways to move forward reminded me of how important it is to keep existing relationships strong and the benefits of forming new partnerships. As Secretary, I have the privilege of traveling across the state to meet with Veterans and Veteran advocates. These meetings allow me to build and strengthen relationships. I appreciate hearing directly from Veterans in places like Rhinelander and Bayfield, Janesville and Chippewa Falls. The input I’ve gotten has led to meaningful changes.

One of those changes is our recently redesigned website - WISVETS.COM. It’s now mobile-device friendly and designed with the Veteran-end-user experience in mind. If you have not done so recently, I encourage you to check it out. While you are there, you can learn about all the excellent Veteran benefits Wisconsin provides for leisure activities such as reduced DNR fees for fishing and hunting, free or reduced fees on Wisconsin State Parks passes, and discounted tickets to attend one of Wisconsin’s sporting events. Details can be found by clicking on the ‘Benefits’ menu on our homepage.

James Bond

Secretary,
Wisconsin
Department of
Veterans Affairs



Unfortunately, too many Veterans are still unaware of the benefits they have at their fingertips. Please help us by encouraging your fellow Veterans to take advantage of the options they may be eligible for, such as the Wisconsin G.I. Bill, Veteran property tax credits, professional licensure waivers, Veteran farmer programs, Veteran-owned businesses, and many more. Working together we can spread the word about these excellent benefits that can help you and your fellow VFW members.

As we observe the anniversary of the 9/11 attacks on our nation, please join us in remembering those who gave their lives to defend our nation and honor our brave first responders who continue to serve our communities.

On behalf of everyone at WDVA, thank you for being our partners and joining us in honoring our promise to deliver for all Wisconsin Veterans.

Happy Birthday PSC Wenninger!



Past State Commander Jerome “Jerry” Wenninger (seated) celebrated his 94th “trip around the sun” this past summer with a gathering in Sheboygan. Above with the birthday boy are his wife Ingrid Wenninger (at right), and PSC Joel Walker and his wife, Virginia Murphy. Jerry served Wolf-Olson VFW Post 1230, one of our earliest chartered Posts in the Dept. for many years, while Ingrid was instrumental in the Auxiliary. The Post closed in 2019 after 95 years. Cheers to many more years of birthdays! Thanks to PSC Walker.

Raffle Calendar
Winners

Date	Ticket	Name	City	Prize
July 4	10872	G. Gausman	Baldwin	\$1,000
	2474	J. Kuzmic	Wind Lake	\$50
	2418	J. Everman	Kenosha	\$50
	2722	V. Klabough	Ellsworth	\$50
	2504	L. Stephenson	Milwaukee	\$50
	11004	J. Hetchler	Barron	\$50
	9499	C. Lemberger	Manitowoc	\$50
July 11	9946	S. Schmidt	Marinette	\$50
	4722	B. Maves	Janesville	\$50
	3688	H. Scallon	Markesan	\$50
	12424	L. Emerson	Viroqua	\$50
	3918	R. Lemmer	Vernon	\$50
	8476	K. Tanic	Freedom	\$50
	8601	L. Ferguson	Elizabeth, CO	\$50
	July 18	3342	L. Robicheau	Montello
11103		VFW Post 8338	Barron	\$50
5245		J. Weis	Waterford	\$50
10749		Dominican Monastery	Marbury, AL	\$50
10949		VFW Post 1039	Menomonie	\$50
501		L. Allen	Pardeeville	\$50
1199		B. Dennison	Waunakee	\$50
July 25		10028	J. Hoogland	Green Bay
	3818	M. Wendt	Appleton	\$50
	11886	VFW Post 7694	Prairie du Sac	\$50
	5280	M. Prejbeanu	Wauwatosa	\$50
	4635	J. Tollefson	Janesville	\$50
	9922	K. Klimek	Marinette	\$50
	10656	M. Audette	Rice Lake	\$50
	Aug. 1	719	A. Rufer	Monroe
1560		T. Quinonez	Darien	\$50
5545		M. Cummings	New Berlin	\$50
2669		D. Langley	Sargent, TX	\$50
14186		P. Bores	Auburndale	\$50
871		L. Walsh	Cherokee, IA	\$50
7333		S. Brinegar	Nekoosa	\$50
Aug. 8		10631	R. Vannatta	Hartland
	10011	J. Vandehie	Mountain	\$50
	955	B. Dolf	Eland	\$50
	2893	R. Maro	Pewaukee	\$50
	14009	C. Buechner	Cross Plains	\$50
	5344	P. Horstmeyer	Oak Creek	\$50
	3569	L. Dickman	Cashton	\$50
	Aug. 15	3023	T. Jensen	Baraboo
9182		VFW Post 2113	De Pere	\$50
9186		VFW Post 2113 Aux	De Pere	\$50
7124		K. Matthees	Greenville	\$50
5572		R. Janatis	Milwaukee	\$50
7458		J. Ellefson	Marshfield	\$50
4414		A. Yaun	Monroe	\$50
Aug. 22		5305	A. Vergolina	West Allis
	3536	M. Hubbard	Hot Springs, AR	\$50
	11189	E. Michels	Eau Claire	\$50
	3672	A. Mason	Sheboygan Falls	\$50
	11052	T. Kobernick	Barron	\$50
	6775	R. Radovan	Sheboygan	\$50
	13423	VFW Post 10405	Altoona	\$50
	Aug. 29	5866	J. Strautmann	Wauwatosa
11977		J. Kirschbaum	Cassville	\$50
7053		D. Mesce	Montello, IL	\$50
5678		L. Klink	Waukesha	\$50
10793		M. Hurstad	Hudson	\$50
10696		T. Vettrus	Prairie Farm	\$50
14652		S. Pieper	Plymouth	\$50

Raffle Winners are also posted on the VFW State Website – vfwwi.org – after the Friday drawings at VFW State HQ. Click on **NEWS**, then on **VFW RAFFLE CALENDAR NEWS**.



Post 2534
Honors
Gordy Harmon

Buckley-Baldwin VFW Post 2534 in Wisconsin Rapids recently honored Past Post Commander Gordon “Gordy” Harmon (left) with a 50-year membership patch. Post Cdr. Shawn Plante is at right. Gordy served in the U.S. Army in 1951 – 1953 in the Korean War, as part of the Headquarters Battery, 159th FA BN, 1 Corps. He continues his very active membership started in 1974. We salute you Gordy, and thank you for your service, then and now! Thanks to Cdr. Plante.

EVENTS AND DEADLINES

September 20	District 1 Meeting – VFW ONLY – 9:30 a.m. – Post 6375, 16 S. Broad St., Elkhorn, WI 53121 Rep. – JVC Stoeber
September 20	District 2 Meeting – VFW and Auxiliary – 9:00 a.m. (Regis. 8:00 a.m.) – VFW Post 328, 200 Veterans Rd., Stoughton, WI 53589 Reps. – COS Lauth and Chaplain Southworth
September 20	District 4 Meeting – Auxiliary ONLY – 9:00 a.m. (Regis. 8:30 a.m.) – Greendale Police Dept., 5911 West Grange Ave., Greendale, WI 53129 Rep. – JVP Mauritz
September 20	District 8 Meeting – VFW and Auxiliary – 11:00 lunch (Regis. 10:00 a.m.) at Coppertown Bar & Grill, 818 Main St., Oconto, WI 54153. Meetings after lunch: VFW at restaurant; AUX at Elks Lodge 887, 310 Farnsworth Ave., Oconto, WI 51453 Reps. – Deputy COS Buehler and SVP Cobb
September 20	District 11 Meeting – VFW and Auxiliary – 9:00 a.m. (Regis. 8:00 a.m.) – VFW Post 2112, 121 S. Rusk Ave., Sparta, WI 54656 Reps. – SVC Simpson and Pres. McWilliams
September 27	District 7 Meeting – VFW and Auxiliary – 10:00 a.m. (Regis. 9:00 a.m.) – VFW Post 388, 212 E. Randolph St., Wausau, WI 54401 Reps. – JVC Stoeber and Conductor Nuernberger
September 27	District 9 Meeting – Auxiliary ONLY – 10:00 a.m. (Regis. 9:00 a.m.) – VFW Post 305, 1300 Starr Ave., Eau Claire, WI 54703 Rep. – Pres. McWilliams
September 27	District 10 Meeting – VFW ONLY – 9:00 a.m. (Regis. 8:00 a.m.) – Hayward Veterans Center, 10534 S. Main St., Hayward, WI 54843 Rep. – SVC Simpson
September 28	District 4 Meeting – VFW ONLY – 12 Noon (Regis. 11:30 a.m.) – Clifford's Supper Club, 10418 W. Forest Home Ave., Hales Corners, WI 53130 Rep. – PSC Eggleston
October 4	District 6 Meeting – VFW ONLY – 10:00 a.m. (Regis. 9:00 a.m.) – VFW Post 9156, 552 S. Evans St., Sheboygan, WI 53081 Rep. – JVC Stoeber
October 4	District 9 Meeting – VFW ONLY – 10:00 a.m. (Regis. 9:00 a.m.) – hosted by Strum VFW Post 6550 at Eleva-Strum High School, W23597 US Hwy. 10, Strum, WI 54770 Schedule: OTI at 10:00 a.m.; Dist. Mtg. at 1:00 p.m. after lunch. Rep. – Cdr. Letto
October 6	Deadline for November/December 2025 Wisconsin VFW News
October 12	District 3 Meeting – VFW ONLY – 10:00 a.m. (Regis. 9:00 a.m.) – hosted by VFW Post 5276, at Fire Station, 210 N. Main St., Potosi, WI 53820 Rep. – SVC Simpson
October 17-19	2025 Big Ten Conference – Isle Casino Hotel & Quad Cities Waterfront Convention Center, Bettendorf, IA
October 24-26	Bus Trip to the VFW National Home – (See registration details info elsewhere in this issue! Also available at vfwwi.org or vfwauxwi.org – HURRY! DEADLINE is September 27!)
October 31	Deadline for Post Audits to State Headquarters
October 31	Deadline for Student entries in Patriot's Pen and Voice of Democracy, AND Teacher nominations for Citizenship Education Award to POSTS.
November 15	Deadline for 990 filing for July-June tax period.
November 15	Fall Council of Administration Meetings – Open to all members in good standing. VFW: Sure Stay Plus by Best Western, 600 Oasis Rd., Black River Falls, WI 54615; Room rate: \$109-\$120, plus taxes; available nights of Nov. 14 and 15. Book directly at 715-284-9471. Agenda: 9:00 a.m. – Council meeting; 1:00 p.m. – tour and meeting at The Highground Veterans Memorial, W7031 Ridge Rd., Neillsville, WI 54456 (Travel on your own) AUXILIARY: 10:00 a.m., American Legion Post 146, 300 Beichl Rd., Beaver Dam, WI 53916 (See mailings about the Vintage Aux. uniform contest, celebrating our 100 year Anniversary)

WI VFW NEWS
Sweepstakes Tickets
due to HQ by
September 29!



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back. Unisex
sizing. Imported.
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ABOVE: Wisconsin PSC Donald Lynch (second from right) was recognized as a VFW Triple Crown Winner for All-American achievement at Post, District and Department levels. AT LEFT: 2024-2025 Dept. Auxiliary President Cheryl Woodards (left) is welcomed into the Circle of Excellence by then-National President Brenda Bryant.



LEFT: PSC Ron Ramos and PDP Cheryl Woodards are front and center with a portion of the Wisconsin Delegation prior to the Tuesday evening Patriotic Rally. RIGHT: By the evening of day four, it was great to sit and enjoy the Rally entertainment, although some folks are looking pretty bushed...



LEFT: A smiling group of Wisconsin supporters surround PDP Cheryl Woodards and her husband Mike (back row) following the Circle of Excellence Ceremony. RIGHT: Wisconsin PSCs Michele Rathke and Cory Geisler – now VFW National Home Trustee #7 and SVCiC respectively – share a nice moment at the new Officers Reception...complete with a triple “feel the love” photo bombing by PSC Mike Furgal; JVC George Stoeber and a very enthused State Commander Ty Letto.

Photos thanks to Rita Byers, Faith Elford, Gundel Metz, Ty Letto and VFW National Aux.



ABOVE LEFT: Dept. Sr. Vice President Charlene Cobb (center) pauses during the Wednesday business session with National Sr. Vice President Donna Mills (left) and PNP Carla Martinez. ABOVE RIGHT: Incoming National President Lois Callahan of Little Rock, Arkansas, is installed by Past C-in-C Hal Roesch, now the Executive Director of the VFW Foundation. AT RIGHT: Wisconsin PSC Bill Backes, now a resident of Arkansas, was part of the Installing Team for National President Lois. See? We KNEW he owned long pants!